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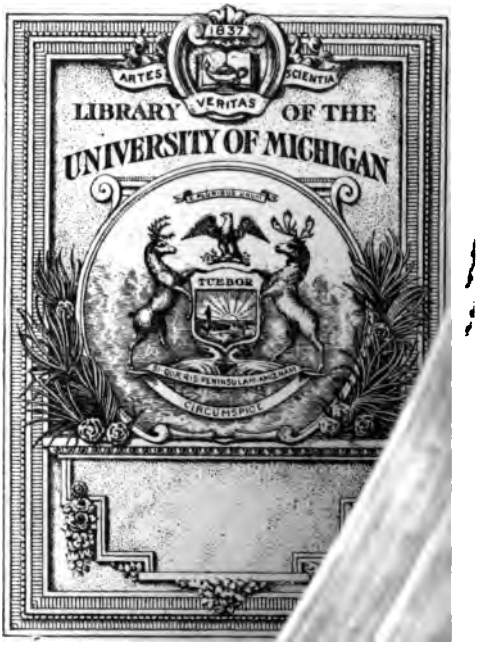
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LETTERS

FROM

THE MOUNTAINS;

BEING THE REAL

CORRESPONDENCE OF A LADY,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1773 AND 1807.

by Mrs. Grant of Laggan

——— "Memory swells
With many a proof of recollected love."

THOMSON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for LONGMAN, HURST, REES, & ORME, Paternoster-row;
J. HATCHARD, Piccadilly;
And Mrs. COOK, Bury-street, St. James's.

1809.

TO

MY SURVIVING CORRESPONDENTS.

To You, my dear friends, whose affection has been the cordial of my life and whose sympathy has been the solace of my afflictions; to you whom neither absence, distance, nor the revolution of years have estranged from me; you, whom the influx of prosperity never raised above me, and who never withheld the consideration which mind pays to mind, from the darkest hour of my adversity; To you I inscribe these Letters, which you have kindly permitted

mitted me to illuminate with names, which accredit the writer, and totally destroy the unjust surmise, — that you are all " like some gay creatures of the element, the creation of an exuberant fancy." To those who could suppose me capable of such an imposition, I only wish that, by being connected by ties as tender, with minds as estimable, they may be convinced of the possibility of your existence.

January 27, 1807.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

LEST any of my readers should indulge the expectation of meeting, in the ensuing pages, either ingenious fiction or amusing narrative, it is but candid to undeceive them.

The simple and careless Letters here offered to the public, carry in themselves the evidences of originality. They are genuine, but broken and interrupted sketches of a life spent in the most remote obscurity. Of the little interest such sketches might possess, much is lost by the necessity of withholding those parts which contained most of narrative and anecdote.

Why letters should be published at all, comprehending so little to excite interest or gratify curiosity, is a question that naturally suggests itself. It cannot be truly said that the gratification of the reader could form an adequate motive for their publication: and, from the nature of them, it is

obvious that the unknown author could have no purpose of vanity to answer by it. Yet may not a picture, seldom drawn, peculiar in its shades and scenery, true to nature, and chastely coloured; may not such a picture amuse, for a while, the leisure of the idle and contemplative?—and it is hoped, that the images here offered of untutored sentiment, of the tastes, the feelings, and habits of those, who, in the secret shades of privacy, cultivate the simple duties and kindly affections of domestic life, may not be without utility.

The soul that rises above its condition, and feels undefined and painful aspirations after unattainable elegance and refinement, may here find an inducement to remain in safe obscurity, contented with the love of truth, of nature, and the

"Humanising Muse;"

while those distinguished beings, who are at once the favourites, of nature and of fortune, may learn to look with complacency on their fellow-minds in the vale of life, and to know that they too have their enjoyments.

The

The hope of such a result might, in some degree, console the writer of "Letters from the Mountains," for the painful circumstance that has elicited their publication.

March 18, 1806.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

When the Writer of these Letters was impelled to submit them to the public eye, unknown, unpatronized, nameless, without partial review or favourable critic, or any prop visible or invisible, her prospect of succeeding was very faint and dubious. Her only hope, of even partial attention, was founded upon that love of truth, which, for the best moral purposes, is implanted in the human heart; that generous instinct, which lives in the unsophisticated mind, and which feels and acknowledges the language

of nature and native feeling, wherever it is heard. Reality, in short, was the prop on which I leant; and it has not deceived me. Minds rich in every intellectual endowment, whose talents give brilliancy to their virtues, and whose virtues give solidity, value, and effect to their talents; minds, to which even the worthy and the wise have been accustomed to look up for light, have shed the lustre of their approbation on the simple sketches of narrative and description, the artless effusions of the heart and imagination, which constitute the whole interest of the following selection. It is for such minds as these to distinguish the durable pencil of truth from the water-colours of fiction; and it is not for their satisfaction, but to carry conviction home to a different and inferior class of readers, that the undeniable proofs of a genuine correspondence are about to appear in a second edition. This edition, drawn forth by the generous encouragement of those whom the public voice has ranked among the worthy and the wise, is not, like the former, attended by the severe, the nameless pangs of

of anxious diffidence. Yet, in the present case, how oppressive is gratitude, and how painful is self-denial. With what delight, were it permitted me, or could my voice confer distinction, should I enumerate my patrons; but more especially my patronesses. Cheered by their applause, exalted by their esteem, and essentially benefited by their liberality, it would be a proud triumph indeed, were I at liberty to name those virtuous, elegant, and enlightened females, of whom it is not enough to say, that they do honour to England, as they are indeed an ornament to human nature. If one durst draw forth retiring worth from its chosen privacy, I should be tempted to boast, that the same elegant and amiable mind which captivated Cowper in its epistolary effusions (which he declared to excel any others of the kind he had met with). I should boast, I say, that the same mind had exerted its active beneficence, and poured forth its invaluable kindness for me. But it is best to be silent on a subject where one must needs say too little, or be thought to say soo much.

To

To my old, beloved, and long tried friends, I have made a separate acknowledgement. Their personal appearance in my behalf may perhaps have the effect of swelling affected contempt into real envy. Yet 'tis rather hard, that they should be reduced to the necessity so humourously described in the fable, where the critics so often contemned the likeness which the painter had drawn, that he was forced, for the vindication of his art, to desire the original to exhibit his countenance through the canvass;—this too they declared no likeness, till the man spoke out to the utter confusion of criticism.

May 14, 1807.

LET-

LETTERS

FROM

THE MOUNTAINS.

LETTER I.

TO MISS EWING, OF GLASGOW*.

Oban†, April 30, 1773.

I HAD it not in my power to fulfil my promiſe at Inverary; however, I have taken the firſt opportunity of troubling you with the recital of my trifling adventures, if ſuch they may be called. After I parted with you, I was too much engroſſed by thinking

* Now Mrs. Smith, of Jordan-Hill; the early and faithful Friend of the Author of theſe Letters.

† Oban is now become a large and flouriſhing village; it is the capital of Lorn, in Argyleſhire.

of the dear friends I had left at Dumbarton, to make many obſervations. How good it was in your aunt to treat you and Harriet* with this excurſion, which lingered out the painful parting hour ſo much longer. Alas! it is a bleak proſpect for a poor traveller, ſcarce ſeventeen, to go ſhe knows not where, to do ſhe knows not what, and live with ſhe knows not whom. But, I carry my affections and my hopes with me. We ſhall meet again, and that as people do in heaven, with increaſed love and knowledge.

When I began to recover my ſpirits, and look about me, I was greatly pleaſed with the romantically variegated banks of Loch Lomond. Luſs, with all its evergreens reflected in the pureſt of mirrors, enchants me; there is a peaceful gloom about it that reminds me of what I uſed to feel, when muſing be-

* Henrietta Reid was a very amiable and deſerving young creature, connected by marriage with Miſs Ewing; and by the more endeared intimacy both with her and the Author. This triple cord was never ſlackened by difference or diſtance of ſituation, but continued unbroken till the concluſion of that excellent perſon's life.

tween

tween the Fir Park and the Biſhop's Caſtle at the cathedral. I believe one great reaſon of my preference of you and our dear H. above every body, was, that you ſeemed to feel and think as I did of that favourite place. I can always get people to laugh with me, and I like to laugh too, at times; but the difficult thing is to get one "ſoft, modeſt, melancholy female fair," that will be grave with me, and enter into my ſerious and ſolemn reflections, when I have them.

I think, if there was ſuch a thing allowable, or what is the ſame thing, faſhionable, a nunnery (a proteſtant one, remember) might be very agreeably ſituated here. What would you think of ſuch a ſcheme? Do not miſtake me; I would not altogether intend this for a place of penance and mortification, but rather as an aſylum from the levity and diſſipation of the age; where we might, uninfluenced by faſhion, and undiſturbed by pride and all the malignant paſſions that diſtract the giddy multitude, enjoy the tranquil pleaſures of a rural retirement. There, too, we might cultivate friendſhips,

which might reſt on the baſis of reaſon, not only through time, but through eternity.

I think I ſee you ſmile, and hear you compare me to the fox in the fable; while from this ſolitude I rail at the loſt pleaſures of the dear town. I arrived here laſt night at eleven, after a tedious journey, in a very rainy day, through the *Mona Lia**, or grey mountain, an endleſs moor, without any road, except a ſmall foot-path, through which our guide conducted the horſes with difficulty. The height of the mountain is prodigious. Croſſing it, we were enveloped in the very region of ſtorms and clouds. A ſmall dreary lake, or abrupt grey crag, was the only variety which interrupted a ſcene, enough to fill any ſuſceptible mind with awe and horror. I am now ſitting, in the ſame rainy weather, in a houſe on the very edge of a ſea, ſprinkled with numberleſs iſlands. But I mean to give you an

* The Mona Lia is a long dreary mountain, without any road but the path of cattle, which one croſſes to go the direct road from Inverary to Oban.

account

account rather of myſelf than of the country, when the fatigue and depreſſion produced by yeſterday's awful journey are over. I refer you to Harriet for an account of the delight with which I beheld Inverary. I don't know whether I am moſt dazzled with the duke's houſe, which has all the antique grandeur of a Gothic caſtle, without its diſmal gloom and petty incumbrances, or with the gaiety and frankneſs of the people. But my fancy was moſt of all ſtruck with the great beeches on the lawn, and the beautiful creſcent which the ſmooth ſandy ſhore makes round the bay on which the town ſtands. I am fallen in love too, deeply, hopeleſsly, in love, with the old gentleman*; ſo would you, if you were here; he is ſo lively, well bred, and intelligent; your commercial beaux would appear clowns, and your military ones coxcombs, compared to him. Pity he is about ſeventy, and has been thrice married.

* Collector Macvicar, of Oban, diſtantly related to the Author, whoſe daughter Mary had the year before reſided for ſome time with her family.

Mary looks very pretty, is very buſy, and very much a houſewife; ſhe ſends kind wiſhes to your ſiſter, whom ſhe likes almoſt as well as I like you.

Farewell, affectionately,

ANNE MAC V.

LETTER II.

TO MISS HARRIET REID, OF GLASGOW.

Inverary, April 28, 1773.

MY deareſt H. I have been ſeriouſly thinking all the way to Luſs, how little we know ourſelves, and what odd beings we are. We left Balclutha* ſo mournful, "thin darkneſs covered our beauty, and we looked forth from our hill, like half ſeen ſtars, through the rainy clouds of night. The ſigh of the manly youths awaited our departure, and we went away, very ſad indeed." I am ſure if St. Mungo's ſpire were capable of gratitude, it owes me ſome, for the many ſad looks I

* Glaſgow.

caſt

caſt back at it. I ſhall ever love my dear native Balclutha, not only for what I enjoyed, but for what I ſuffered in it. What I have ſuffered was the common lot of humanity; what I have enjoyed was much more, for who ever had ſuch friends as mine? But now to our recollections. Who would have ſuppoſed, when we were at Dumbarton, that ever we ſhould have dried our eyes? Yet when we met in the great room, when the ſea-born ſwains from Greenock joined us, when "the flame roſe from the burning oak," we roſe to ſerene, thence to cheerful, and had we not been forced to part ſo ſoon, we might have got up to *hilarity*. Then, when the great ſtruggle came, and we did really part, I thought my heart would break; and your laſt words ſounded in my ears like a knell; and I thought I ſhould not ſmile this whole ſummer. I read the folded paper James Hall gave me to amuſe me when I ſtept into the carriage, about which you were ſo curious; it related to real events, and was

"So ſad, ſo tender, and ſo true."

'Twas from a young man of merit and parts; who, by a love marriage, had, alas! condemned himſelf to perpetual poverty. He had gone to ſcramble among the wealth of England for a ſubſiſtence. Why ſhould I tell of his ſorrows and diſappointments? Finally, my ſiſter, he wrote this letter to a friend (probably James Hall himſelf) under thoſe impreſſions which approaching death inſpired. That princely knight errant, Francis the Firſt, wrote to his mother from the field of a loſt battle: "Madam, all is loſt but honour;" good, but this is better ſtill. "The reſult is, all is loſt, but a ſure confidence in the Divine mercy." And what elſe can a poor finite creature hold to, when the world and all that is dear and lovely in it, fades from his ſight? It was a moſt affecting letter: "I wept abundant, and I wept aloud." Yet, alas! I fear they were not ſuch generous tears as you might ſuppoſe. If I had not been ſo very ſorry myſelf, I ſhould not have been ſo eaſily melted. Well, now I was very ſure I would not ſmile this ſummer, nor yet read any book but the Bible and the Night

Night Thoughts*; even the Odyſſey was to be rejected. And thus I travelled on, ſo ſerious and ſo ſad. I was got far beyond moralizing; and then came on ſuch ſmall, ſoft, melancholy rain, and Ben Lomond's great head was wrapt in ſuch a veil of thick clouds, that the nearer we drew, the leſs we ſaw of it. And as to my three friends, they ſhewed as much ſenſe and feeling as Job's did, at firſt, whoſe ſilence, on an occaſion which common minds would have ſeized to ſay common things, I always admired. In ſhort the whole party ſeemed loſt in meditation, till the ſight of Loch Lomond rouſed us. What a happy faculty is an active imagination to combat the evils of ſickly ſenſibility! I paſt over all the beautiful groves and corn fields that adorn the lower ſide, for I had ſeen ſuch things before, and they brought images of happineſs and tranquillity which my mind could not reliſh in its de-

* The Night Thoughts, and the Odyſſey, were favourite ſtudies among theſe friends, to which they were wont to make many ſerious and playful allu-ſions.

preſſed ſtate. But the ſolemn and melancholy grandeur of the lofty dark mountains, and abrupt rocks tufted with heath and juniper, that roſe on the other ſide of the lake, and ſeemed to cloſe its upper end, arreſted my attention at once. I peopled their narrow and gloomy glens with thoſe vindictive clans, that uſed to make ſuch fatal incurſions of old. I thought I ſaw Bruce and his faithful few aſcending them, in his forced flight from Bute. A train of departed heroes ſeemed to paſs on their clouds in long review, and, do but gueſs who cloſed the proceſſion; no other than the notorious Rob Roy*, riding up the Loch ſide with the lady he forced away, and the "twenty men in order," who make ſuch a figure in the ballad. My mother knew the family, and tells the whole hiſtory of the tranſaction. The lady, it would appear was too delicate a ſubject for ſuch a rough adventure, for ſhe died of grief very ſoon after. I ſaw M. M.'s dwelling

* Rob Roy Macgregor, the leader of a train of banditti; the laſt perſon in Scotland who carried off an heireſs forcibly.

beneath

beneath romantic cliffs, and by a roaring ſtream, but I was not near enough to trace her ſtately ſteps. I made a happy tranſition from Rob Roy, to think of her, and her good books, and her cheerful piety: ſuch an example to us all. Pray tell her I will never forget her.

All this brought us to Luſs, which I am too lazy to deſcribe twice; ſo muſt refer you to Bell. But I will tell you how I took a penſive walk to admire Inchmarron*, and the ſetting ſun, while dinner was preparing. There "I chewed the food of ſweet and bitter fancy," and felt ſome of thoſe painful twitches, or ſpaſms (are they not?) in my breaſt, that remind one how much the ſoul is ſuperior to the frame that is thus influenced by it. Dinner brought us together, converſation grew inſenſibly cheerful; our Greenock

* Inchmarron is a beautiful iſland in Loch Lomond, three miles long, narrow and woody. It ſerves as a park for deer, and is the more intereſting from being choſen ſometimes as a retreat for harmleſs maniacs, who roam at large, and lodge with the Foreſter.

friend amuſed us with amphibious humour, ſuch as all the weſt coaſt abounds in; and before tea, your friend, who was not to relax a muſcle this year, more than half ſmiled, and by ſupper time laughed outright. But truly might I ſay, that, "in the midſt of laughter the heart is ſad." Give me credit for my honeſty, imitate my ſincerity, and tell me when *you* laughed firſt. In the mean time I will tell you ſomething to laugh at: My "three friends" being engaged in a long diſcourſe, replete with Argyleſhire genealogy, I was for a while quite abſtracted; my Oſſianic mania returned with double force; where every blaſt ſeemed to touch a viewleſs harp; and every paſſing cloud, brightened with the beams of the moon, appeared to my mind's eye a vehicle for the ſhades of the lovely and the brave, that live in the ſongs of other times. How ſoftly ſweet, how ſadly plaintive, were the ſtrains that now arreſted my attention! from the dark caverns of the kitchen they proceeded, and, through the looſe disjointed floor of our apartment they

"Roſe like a ſtream of rich diſtill'd perfumes."

This

This muſic was both vocal and inſtrumental; but no ſuch voice, no ſuch inſtrument, had I ever heard. Could I ſit ſtill when curioſity was ſo powerfully excited? Believe I did not, but, ſtealing down on tiptoe, beheld a great dark-browed highlander, ſitting double over the fire, and playing. "Macgrigor na Ruara," on two trumps* at once, while a nymph, half hidden amongſt her heavy locks, was pacing backwards, turning a great wheel, and keeping time with voice and ſteps to his mournful tones. I retired, not a little diſconcerted, and dreamt all night of you and Malvina by turns. Spring appears here but in early infancy. Yet how can I tell you how mildly beautiful the ſun aroſe over the diſtant hills of Morven; or, with what ſecret veneration I traced the foot-

* Jews Harps.—"Macgrigor na Ruara," a beautiful plaintive tune, very popular in the Highlands. The mourner, in a pathetic and very peculiar ſtrain of poetry, laments the ſlaughter of an outlaw, who appears to have been a Grant, and rightful poſſeſſor of Glenlyon. A very cloſe tranſlation of this fine reſting poem is given, by the Author of theſe lead. in the 4th vol. of Mr. Thomſon's Scottiſh Muſic.

ſteps

ſteps of my fathers along their blue gleaming lakes, or through their narrow vales. I ſaw, in the courſe of this morning's ride, Glenſalach, in a ſecret nook at the end of Lock Long, I think it is called; a name ſignifying the hidden vale, and hidden it certainly is. One would think it a ſad exile to live in one of theſe receſſes; yet by what I can gather from the converſation of our friends, people ſomehow contrive to be both gay and buſy here.

We drew near Lochaw and caught a a glimpſe of Barabreak, familiar to me as the often-deſcribed abode of my anceſtors. Here we had a long detail of their ſimple manner of life, their humble virtues, and the affectionate confidence that ſubſiſted between them and their copartners in the ſame poſſeſſion. My father delighted to ſhew us the ſtream where he firſt caught a trout, and the little iſland which had been the object of his firſt excurſion in ſearch of nuts and raſpberries: and I liſtened with knight to tales of other times, told with ſo lo[illegible]h animation; I felt as proud of the genuine worth, and unſtained probity of my anceſtors,

anceſtors, as if they had been all that the world admires and envies, and only wiſhed that I might not prove unworthy of them. I have already forgotten the name of the place we breakfaſted at; but there our fellow-traveller, or attendant rather, forſook us; and there we picked up an original of quite another kind. The carriage was detained while one of the horſes was ſhod, and I took that opportunity of gathering ſome of the freſheſt primroſes I had ever ſeen, from the roots of a weeping birch, that actually "wept odorous dews" upon me, as I ſheltered under its drooping branches. How do I love theſe artleſs bowers, and how mueh I wiſh to have you with me here; to tell you things that no other mortal would underſtand or care for. My walk was ſtopped by a ſtream, whoſe deſcent into the lake was covered by thick ſhades of alder and hazel, that reminded me of the creek where Ulyſſes went on ſhore in Phæacia, and then I wiſhed I had my Odyſſey out of the chaiſe. But alas! no Odyſſey was to be had. Then I was called to breakfaſt, in an upper room,

room, the floor of which was much worſe than that at Luſs; and indeed pervious to every ſound. We had taken poſſeſſion of the only tolerable room, and a newly-arrived traveller was heard growling for his breakfaſt below. He did not ſwear, but was ſo fretful and querulous; ſo diſpleaſed with every thing that was given or ſaid to him, and his manner of growling too was ſo amuſing, he ſhewed ſo much ingenuity in diſcovering faults in every thing, that I burſt out a laughing, and ſaid we were certainly haunted by the ghoſt of Smelfungus, of whom Sterne gives ſuch an amuſing account. By the bye, we had juſt that morning paſſed, "*with reverence due*," the monument of the original Smelfungus, which riſes near his native ſpot, beſide his favourite lake, which he delights to deſcribe in Humphrey Clinker. Tea was prepared, but ſtill thunder muttered hoarſe below.

My father, inquiring about the ſtranger, and, finding he was a gentleman's ſon of the country, very good-naturedly ſent him an invitation to breakfaſt; for he concluded the

the houſe (a very poor one) could not furniſh two breakfaſts, with their apparatus (of equal elegance) and that this occaſioned the ill humour by which we were incommoded. He was a ſtudent, travelling home from college; he left all his irritability below, and came up with an air ſo manly, well-bred, and accommodating, that had we not received ſome previous intelligence of his character through the floor, we ſhould have thought highly of him; yet, through the ſtrong lines of a marked and ſenſible countenance, the ſcowl of diſcontent was but too obvious. I, who for my part deteſt every mode of ſelfiſh luxury, could not endure to ſee a native highlander make his good humour dependant on a good breakfaſt, and was moreover diſguſted by certain learned ſtrictures*

* Among the peculiarities of highland manners is an avowed contempt for the luxuries of the table. A highland hunter will eat with a keen appetite and ſufficient diſcrimination. But were he to ſtop in any purſuit, becauſe it was meal time, to growl over a bad dinner, or viſibly exult over a good one, the manly dignity of his character would be conſidered as fallen for ever.

on

on new-laid eggs, which I am ſure made no part of his college acquiſitions. Then his appearance was ſo manly, that this puppy-iſm was doubly provoking. However he ſweetened by degrees into an agreeable and intelligent fellow-traveller. But, O! not a ſingle ſpark of enthuſiaſm! Oſſian himſelf was never blinder, than he is to the ſoul-moving beauties of that bard.

Why, after tiring you and myſelf with ſuch a detail, ſhould I tell you of the horrors of Glencroe, through which we travelled in a diſmal rainy day? In one particular, I dare ſay, I agreed with the ſtranger, for I really thought dinner the moſt intereſting event of this day's journey, not merely as a repaſt, but the manner of it was ſo novel. There was a little inn, thatched, and humbler than any of the former; we came very cold to it; we found a well-ſwept clay floor, and an enlivening blaze of peats and bruſhwood, two windows looking out upon the loch we were to croſs, and a primitive old couple, whoſe freſh complexion made you wonder at their ſilver hairs. All the apparatus of fiſh-

ing

ing and hunting were ſuſpended in the roof; I thought myſelf in Ithaca, though Homer does not ſpeak of peats or trout, and far leſs of grouſe. The people ſhewed an alacrity in welcoming us, and a concern about our being wet and cold, that could not have been aſſumed. I never took ſuch a ſudden liking to people ſo far out of my own way. I ſuppoſe we are charmed with cheerfulneſs and ſenſibility in old people, becauſe we don't expect it; and with unſervile courteſy, in the lower claſs, for the ſame reaſon. "How populous, how vital is the grave;" ſays your favourite Young: "how populous how vital are the glens!" I ſhould be tempted to ſay here: but after the "ſtupendous ſolitude," through which we had juſt paſſed, the blazing hearth and kindly hoſt had peculiar attractions.

Shall I tell you of our dinner? Never before did I blot paper with ſuch a detail; but it is inſtructive to know how cheaply we may be pleaſed. On a clean table of two fir deals we had as clean a cloth; trout new from the lake, eggs freſh as our ſtudent's heart

heart could wiſh; *kippered* ſalmon, fine new-made butter and barley-cakes, which we preferred to the loaf we had brought with us. Smelfungus began to mutter about the cookery of our trouts; I pronounced them very well dreſt, out of pure ſpite; for, by this time, I could not endure him, from the pains he took to mortify the good people, and to ſhew us he had been uſed to lodge and dine better. I feaſted, and was quite entranced, thinking how you would enjoy all that I enjoyed. Dear Harriet, how my heart longs for you, when I think how yours is made to ſhare all my wild pleaſures!

The boat was croſſing with other paſſengers over the ferry, which is very wide. We were forced to wait its arrival two hours; to me very ſhort ones; one of them I have given to you, for I could never tell you all this when the warm feeling of the minute had worn off. I have kept my promiſe, of being minute, moſt religiouſly: there is merit in it.

For you I have forſaken Smelfungus, who

who is yonder walking on the Loch ſide, in all the ſurly dignity of diſpleaſure. I am going to tea, and will put him in good humour, with queſtions about his college. What a pleaſant tea-drinking! the old man knew all my father's uncles, and the good woman was ſo pleaſed with my intereſt in her houſehold œconomy! It produced a veniſon ham, ſacred to favourites, and every other good thing ſhe had; every one was pleaſed, and Smelfungus himſelf became,

"As mild and patient as the female dove,
When firſt her golden couplets are diſclos'd."

And here I conclude this long letter to begin another at Inverary. Innocent, beloved, and amiable, what more can I wiſh you, that will not riſk a ſhare of your happineſs?

Adieu, Beloved!

LETTER III.

TO MISS REID, GLASGOW.

Inverary, April 29, 1773.

If ſuch a ſnarler as Smelfungus is ſo undeſervedly happy as to have an Harriet to care for every thing he does, and think his rambling letters intereſting, I fancy he is now pouring out to that favoured fair-one a doleful complaint of thoſe "vapours, and clouds, and ſtorms," which only exalted me to "ſolemn thought." He indeed has a better title to call them "kindred glooms," yet he does not ſeem very fond of theſe aërial relations. He and I are a complete contraſt; he has nothing of a highlander but by his birth; now that is the preciſe and only circumſtance wanting to make me a complete one. Such a day as we had after croſſing the ferry! ſuch torrents! Our carriage ſtood us in good ſtead, when we left the boat, in which indeed we got completely

pletely wet. But, alas! for the unſheltered head of Smelfungus, and for the new hat he was ſo careful of. Wet and weary, late and dreary, we arrived. And yet I was not depreſſed. O that I could ſhare with you the muſings that abſorbed my whole ſoul this evening. They pertained not to the earth; nor any of its preſent inhabitants. There are ſome ſolemn hours when the wings of the ſoul are expanded to purſue the flight of the departed. When, balanced betwixt hope and fear, we hover over the abyſs we are forbidden to explore, and anticipate the hour when the "grave ſhall give up their dead." Did you not tell me to write my thoughts juſt as they occurred? How elſe ſhould we converſe in abſence? how keep the flame that warms my heart alive? Believe me, I carry the ſame ſentiments and recollections with me here, that uſed to be my companions at the Fir Park, or the Bogton Linn, to which latter preſent my reſpects, when you trace my old haunts. The approach to this city of the mountains was ſo veiled in miſt, that I could only admire

mire, through watery moon-beams, the ſemi-circular ſweep which the beach forms round the lake; but I ſhall be here all day to-morrow, and tell you all that pleaſes me. I leave to Smelfungus to chronicle complaints; if he felt as acutely as I do, he would have no pleaſure in recording his painful feelings, which is to ſuffer them twice.

Five in the Morning.

What a long ſweet oblivion of ſorrow and fatigue have I had ſince nine laſt night! After diſcharging ſuperior duties, I am greatly tempted to worſhip the ſun. His firſt appearance from the ſea was ſo overpowering after his long abſence. There he is, "Round as the ſhield of my fathers;" teaching the mountains to rejoice, and the waves to roll in light. "Whence are thy beams, O Sun?" I am not mad, moſt *gentle* Harriet, though you may think I do not quite ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs. But conſider it is the ſpring of day, of life, and of the year, and indulge me in rejoicing a little, after I have mourned ſo much and ſo truly.

How

How could I exiſt, feeling ſorrow ſo poignantly, if the fair face of nature had not peculiar charms, endleſs ſources of delight for me: Though my ſorrows ſhould be multiplied, as very likely they may, I ſhall have conſolations peculiarly my own, that, like Milton's ſweet muſic,

"Will breathe
Above, about, and underneath."

How literal this truth is, the dulcet ſounds that ſtole through the floor at Luſs may teſtify. A little dreſs, a little Odyſſey, a little breakfaſt, and then—I ſhall behold the faces of my kindred.—I have ſeen them; and here they come in ſucceſſion. - - - Now, I truſt, you are tired of characters, and may come willingly down to ſtill life. Laſt ſummer you heard half a dozen ample deſcriptions of Inverary; this ſummer, it is very likely, you may have as many more; and that from people not ſo ſubject to the digreſſive infirmity as your friend. Depend upon theſe matter-of-fact people for an account of this princely edifice, and its de-

 pendencies;

pendencies; I ſhall merely tell you of particulars that ſtruck me moſt forcibly; premiſing that this caſtle, as they call it here, is not finiſhed within. Firſt, then, the Gothic grandeur of the hall, open to the very top, and lighted by a cupola, delighted me; 'tis like a receptacle for the train of a mighty chieftain, and quite in uniſon with the boldneſs of the neighbouring ſcenery. There is a kind of gallery or corridor carried round this hall, from which you enter the upper rooms; the doors of theſe you ſee all in one view, as you ſtand in the hall. 'Tis not like any thing you ever ſaw before; yet I am ſure you would admire it. We were ſuddenly uſhered into a beautiful ſummer parlour, which had a ſaſhed door that opened into a beautiful lawn. Will you believe me, when I tell you, that I thought, for a moment, I was in the open fields, ſurrounded by people engaged in rural ſports, the ſcene was ſo lively, and ruſhed ſo ſuddenly on me. The firſt thing that awoke me to the knowledge of what I was about, was the different ſtyle of the countenances from

from thoſe I was accuſtomed to ſee. What ſhould this be but a room hung with Gobelins' tapeſtry, whoſe magical perfection of reſemblance made you think the hay-makers and children lived and moved. And for the trees, I am ſure your nephew Francis would have tried to climb them. I ſaid, reluctantly, "Adieu, ye woods!" And yet, after all, I am not ſure I ſhould like ſuch a room, unleſs merely to wonder and gaze at. Can it be the love of truth in the mind, that recoils at a very near deception? Wax figures, and very excellent trees in tapeſtry, make me ſomething like Young's monkies, who, "at a mirror ſtand amazed;" "they fail to find what they ſo plainly ſee." I did not "peep and chatter," but my wonder felt ſomething like diſappointment. I was diſappointed too in ſeeing ſo few pictures. I ſhould like to find portraits in this region of beauty, the lord and lady of which could only have been parallels to each other.

I am told their children excel even the Hamilton family. So they ſhould, having a double claim; their father having been a

model of manly grace in his day, though now a little jaundiced with ſtomach complaints. And here I could find in my heart to ſtop and rail at the world, which, you know, I bear no great good will to. One hears ſo little about him, he is ſo quietly paſſed over to make room for daſhers, and boaſters, and fighters, and talkers. *He* does not wiſh to be talked of, 'tis certain; but then I would not have them quite ſo complaiſant as to give him all his will in this particular. Seek for a great man's true and ſolid praiſe at his own door, among his tenants and neighbours; and let it be a material part of his praiſe, that he has neighbours, that is to ſay, that he lives at home among them. In this particular, the Duke is unrivalled and alone. Every mouth here will tell you of ſome of theſe "quiet waters, ſoft and ſlow," that ſteal ſilently on, carrying bounty, and beneficence, into all the corners of obſcurity. Don't be tired, now; for I have a whole volume to write of this good Duke's worth, and wiſdom, which improves and

and bleſſes the whole country; but I can no more

"Let him ſtill the ſecret joy partake,
To follow virtue, ev'n for virtue's ſake."

Yet, I hope, when this modeſt and amiable benefactor of mankind ſleeps with his fathers*, and when the tenants have ceaſed to ſay,

"He is the beſt of countrymen;"

(a word equivalent to patriot) ſome powerful voice ſhall ſay with effect,

"Riſe, Muſes, riſe, add all you tuneful breath,
Such muſt not ſleep in darkneſs and in death."

For, as much as I was bent on dying laſt winter, I may ſtill hear theſe notes:

"Sweet to the world, and grateful to the ſkies."

You will ſay I am quite carried off; but I feel the patriot paſſion ſtrong myſelf, and

* That time is arrived; for laſt year Scotland was deprived of this venerable Duke: who, independent of the rank he adorned, and the power he uſed for the beſt purpoſes, was beloved in life and lamented in death, as a worthy private character, and a genuine patriot.

am charmed when I find one actually doing all that I dream of doing.—The offices of this fabric are magnificent for their purpoſes, and the roads leading to them wonders; but what I greatly wonder at is, that they ſhould place the offices at ſuch a diſtance as to require ſuch roads. I believe there is no danger of my ever living in a great houſe, and I am not ſorry for it. There is ſuch a ſtately abſence of all comfort; every thing that unſophiſticated nature delights to cling to, is put ſo far away; and the owner ſeems ſomehow alone in the middle of his works, like Nebuchadnezzar, ſaying, "Behold now this great Babylon which I have made." I ſhould be very ſorry to have my poor houyhnhams where I could neither hear them neigh, nor ſee them ſhake their necks, clothed with thunder. Suppoſe me above looking at hens and ducks, I ſhould not like to have my ſtately peacocks, and majeſtic ſwans, ſwimming and ſweeping a mile off. The gardens, too, muſt keep their diſtance. What have poor Flora and Pomona done, to deſerve baniſhment? As for the ſheltering

Dryads

Dryads of antiquity, they are all marched off, for no reaſon that I can think of, but their being grown old maids, and the bleak blaſts ſeem invited in their ſtead. I wonder whether people are to live longer in theſe temples of Eolus, than they did in the ſheltered "halls of other days," where every thing around them was animated and intereſting. I wiſh you could but once ſee the moon ſhine on Loch Fyne, and the ſhadow of Duniquaich falling on the great houſe. Now, you muſt obſerve, the bay forms a perfect creſcent, the caſtle, ſurmounted by Duniquaich aforeſaid, and ſkirted at great diſtance by offices, adorns one end of the creſcent; on the very edge of the bay ſtands Inverary, a mean-looking yet cheerful and populous place, deriving a peculiar beauty from its ſituation. 'Tis one ſtreet facing the water; and beyond it a fine road, ſurrounded by a beautiful lawn, ſprinkled with prodigious beech-trees, ſweeps from one horn of the creſcent to the other. I hear, and, being no friend to alterations, am ſorry to hear, that this ancient town is to be tranſported and removed to the other

horn of the creſcent, where the inn and cuſtom-houſe now ſtand. This will augment the ſolitary grandeur of the houſe, by throwing every thing far from it. The Duke, who does every thing well that he takes in hand, will, no doubt, raiſe finer buildings; but they will only look like children's card-houſes, as the preſent ſet appear like mole-hills. Nature here is ſo vaſt and grand, that the works of art diminiſh to nothing in her awful preſence. I dare ſay, looking from Benleddi, the caſtle would appear attached to Duniquaich, like Grildrig's box at the girdle of Glumdalclitch.

We ſpent the evening with the ſame relations we had ſeen in the forenoon. Our old friend, the Collector's ſiſter, is a moſt ſingular evergreen; indeed ſhe reſembles himſelf a good deal; thin, lively, tall, erect, with a keen expreſſive eye, and a freſh youthful complexion, though much above ſeventy. Awake and alive to every thing; always amuſing, occaſionally facetious, and abounding in anecdote: ſhe has ſeen many ſorrows, and borne them firmly, to ſay the leaſt.

There

There were aſſembled at ſupper - - - - -
I like the kindneſs and frankneſs of theſe friends vaſtly.

A ſiſter of Dr. M. whom you may remember with us laſt winter, is newly married to one of theſe couſins. She has been growing wiſe for half a century, without cooling in her benevolence in the region of celibacy. She was always a good creature, and a friend to all the friendleſs; and has now an occupation well ſuited to ſuch a diſpoſition. I am ſure he married her, beautileſs and moneyleſs as ſhe was, that ſhe might be a kind ſtepmother. And ſo ſhe is, and ſeems ſo pleaſed with having a family to rear. She puts me very much in mind of a hen with an alien brood of young ducks. If I were to marry at all, which is very unlikely, thinking on many ſubjects as I do, I could be eaſily reconciled to a ready made family, ſuppoſing them docile and grateful. I can eaſily comprehend how one could adopt them to one's affections. Then think of being quit of their plague while they are mere vegetables; and then become mere

animals; and think of the credit one ſhould get for being kind to theſe ready-made innocents. And moreover, the ſtrong hold ſuch generoſity would give you of your lord's affections. Now if there was any office that would inſure one againſt paying mother Eve's penalty, I think breeding ducks would be no bad ſpeculation. But indeed you may depend upon it we ſhall never be ſo happy as we have been. No, never.

The Collector's horſes are juſt arrived; we muſt leave Inverary to-morrow, and it will rain; and I am ſo ſorry; and I have not half ſeen it, nor taken leave of poor Smelfungus. I will take leave of you, however; and, if I come alive to Oban, will riſe at five every morning to write to you.

Good night, beloved!

LETTER IV.

TO MISS REID.

Oban, April 30, 1773.

HERE I am, but dreadfully tired; tired of rain; tired of riding; tired of long moors, but, above all, of long deſcriptions. See my letter to Bell*, where you will find how I came through the Mona Lia. O, never was moor ſo long and ſo ſolitary!

You will ſay my active imagination might people the brown deſert; ſo it did, but it was with fleeting ſpectres, and half-ſeen viſions, melting into grey miſt. *A-propos* to our ducklings; you can't think how my ſpirit was refreſhed by a flock of wild ones, that took flight from a ſmall lake in that ſame dreary moor. I ſaw, or thought I ſaw, two or three deer through the miſt, and that did me a great deal of good. Still more, I was ſupported by a benevolent pro-

* Page 4.

ject for the reformation of ſome of our friends; I mean ſuch of them as do, or ſay, no great harm, but who ſo bewilder their brains and waſte their time among endleſs mazes of ribbands and lace, and tattle and tales, and "pribbles and prabbles," as honeſt parſon Evans calls them, that, I am convinced, ſome ſolitary pilgrimages over the brown deſert might wean them from this endleſs trifling, and teach them firſt to think, and then, "on reaſon build reſolve," which might be found "a column of true dignity," even in woman. But I will no longer bewilder you among my meditations. The general reſult, however, was, that we ſhould be oftener alone. I am ſure I have little merit to claim from ſuperior reflection or culture. Could I have indulged myſelf in the ſociety of others of my age, I ſhould, moſt probably, have done as they did. Had I been educated like other people, I ſhould not have felt the neceſſity of educating myſelf.

If, therefore, my thinking and reading have been of any advantage, they are merely the

the reſult of certain painful and diſcouraging privations. If others were ſecluded like me, or exiled, as I am about to be, from all that was wont to pleaſe, they would be forced to ſeek reſources within themſelves. This too might be a cure for vanity. I can eaſily ſuppoſe recluſes proud, but it is among frivolous ſociety that people grow vain. We are proud of what we certainly poſſeſs; but vanity only ſeeks credit for ſeeming, and is juſt as well ſatisfied to be admired for rouge as for native bloom. It lives in the breath of others, and dies when it is no longer ſeen.

Don't think I am ſo new-fangled, as to begin to rail at the town, which I have juſt quitted, out of fondneſs for a country which is ſo new to me, and which, very probably, I may not like. But I am ſo provoked at the tireſome ſameneſs of treading one inſignificant round for ever. Were it a week, a month, a ſeaſon, that was to be conſumed in impertinence and inſignificance; but all day long, and every day, and to grow old in it, and die without having lived to any conſiderable

ſiderable purpoſe! People in the country may be abundantly ſilly and ſelfiſh, but the paſſion for deſpicable and corrupting novelties is not ſo conſtantly fed. When the heart is chaſtened by adverſity, or ſoftened by ſorrow, the ſalutary impreſſion is not too ſoon effaced. The mind is in a manner forced on the contemplation of nature; and I don't know how any one can ſee one's Maker in his greateſt works, without being the better and the wiſer for it. Yet to thoſe who are truly deſirous of improvement, the town affords greater choice of ſociety. That, and that alone, I regret in leaving it. I will not be ſo cruel as to carry you back to the moor, but I will tell you how it terminated. We deſcended into low grounds, in view of the ſea, about twilight, and there was my ſpirit exhilarated with the ſight of Glenfeuchan. The ſweet ſtream that winds by it, the green paſtoral vale ſheltered by an overhanging mountain, in which it lies, the birch grove, in which the houſe is emboſomed, and, above all, the air of "animated peace," which it derived from the return of the cattle

and

and the ſervants, at the evening hour; and, moreover, the idea of the warm welcome I ſhould receive from that agreeable romp, Mary Campbell, whom you have ſeen with me laſt winter; all this preſſed ſo forcibly on my mind, that I would have given any thing to ſtop here: but this indulgence was not permitted, ſo with a heavy heart, I went on, and did not reach Oban till eleven.

Are the cares of a houſehold productive of the ſame alteration in manner that we have often obſerved to be the reſult of matrimony? Mary M——r and I were too unlike to be congenial; but kindred, and thoſe who live together in a perpetual interchange of kindneſs, may love without aſſimilating, and even though their views and purſuits ſhould be very different. That was preciſely the caſe with M. and me, when ſhe lived with us. Though ſhe has little taſte, no refinement, and not the ſmalleſt thirſt for knowledge, ſhe is not heartleſs, has a good underſtanding, and a quick apprehenſion of the ludicrous. I am ſure, too, ſhe loves me as well as ſhe does any one elſe, and ſo ſhe ought;

ought; indeed ſhe ſeems to love me ſtill, and is all kindneſs and attention; yet there is a viſible conſtraint about her. She is often abſent, and does not enter into the ſpirit of raillery or what ſhe uſed to call fun. Who could ever think of Mary's being abſtracted, and yet abſtracted ſhe certainly is. I wonder much how people ſhould be ſo fond of marrying, when the cares of a houſehold make ſuch an alteration on a girl not ſixteen. She manages ſurpriſingly, and pays an attention to every thing, which I am ſure I could not do, though I am older, and accounted more ſedate. It is very encouraging to her to ſee how much her father is pleaſed with every thing ſhe does. And I am ſo pleaſed with her father; he is a delightful old man*. If his are the manners of the old Court, I wiſh I had lived a little earlier. He is not the leaſt formal. Indeed, he has lived ſo much among military people, and has ſo much of their general

* Collector Macvicar was a poliſhed, intelligent, and public-ſpirited character, and was a great favourite of the late Duke of Argyle.

knowledge,

knowledge, and general politeneſs, that his are rather the manners of an old officer. ------ He delights to talk of his "laſt friend," who I believe was an amiable woman, and lived happily with him, for the ſhort time their union laſted; though the difference of age amounted to little leſs than fifty years. I muſt ſurely have told you the ſingular hiſtory of that marriage. The only fruit of it, a little girl not three years old, is a creature you could not ſee without loving. He doats upon her, and I do not wonder at it; every look and motion of the dear little orphan charms one. She is pretty, too, though not remarkably; but ſhe ſhews ſenſe and feeling that is incredible. The ſweet creature follows me already. I never ſaw a child half ſo intereſting. Good night; I will tell you to-morrow what kind of place this is; this day I have devoted to the people. Beſides, it ſnows ſo hard, as to remind me of your favourite poem,

"Oft for the proſpect ſprightly May ſhould yield!
Rain-pouring clouds have darken'd all the air,
And ſnows untimely whiten'd o'er the field."

LETTER V.

TO MISS REID.

Oban, May 2, 1773.

THE morning is clear and mild, and ſomething like what May ought to be.

The Collector's dwelling-houſe forms part of the cuſtom-houſe; it ſtands on the verge of this fine bay. The tide flows up to the door, but retires half a mile back, and diſcovers a ſcene very new and amuſing to me, who have never been at the ſea-ſide, except in embarking and debarking. Vaſt ſtones, where the footing is difficult, mixed with gravel, ſhells, and ſea-weed, compoſe the extenſive beach, which the ebbing ſea leaves naked. I propoſe indulging my delight in overcoming difficulties, and exploring odd places and odd things, by many a walk in purſuit of the retreating ſea nymphs. For you muſt know 'tis ſettled I am to ſtay till June, when the Collector and Mary are to conduct

conduct me to Fort William, where my father will meet me. I am glad of it, I shall not be kept so busy, and have more society and amusement. Here is an excellent library, left the Collector by that ill-fated brother who was the patron of my father's orphan childhood. His fine talents, and finer feelings, served only to embitter misfortunes such as could not have happened to a common man. His morals were spotless, and he was not the victim of rashness and imprudence, as is often the case, with these "fine souls too feelingly alive;" nor was poverty among the number of those misfortunes which pursued, and at length overwhelmed him. His fate was very singular indeed; he might have been said to die a martyr to wounded honour. Had he died when the wound was inflicted, his fate would have been comparatively mild; but a man whose form, whose manners, whose mind, were distinguished, above all others, by peculiar elegance, to languish in painful obscurity, branded by a set of miscreants with the disgrace of treachery, which his soul abhorred!

abhorred! All his patriotic plans for the improvement of the country, all his plans of life, and hopes of happineſs, blaſted by a malignity too baſe and ſecret to be expoſed, and too barbarous to be reſiſted! When forced by the machinations of his arch enemy, Lord J.* to ſell his company in the 42d, he tried to amuſe himſelf by rural occupations in his native country; for his mind was too deeply wounded to find ſolace in thoſe literary purſuits, to which he had been formerly ſo much attached, and in which, if we may judge by his letters, he was ſo qualified to excel. A hypochondriac affection, which made life burthenſome to him, and often tempted him to throw off the load, made him frequently change his abode, though well aware, that "change of place was only change of pain." Melancholy, ſolitude, and the corroding remembrance of an irremediable misfortune, ſoured the moſt gentle and

* Lord John Murray, who was himſelf miſled by a deſigning ſycophant, and afterwards prejudiced the Duke of Cumberland againſt this hard-fated gentleman.

benignant

benignant of mortals into abſolute miſanthropy. I am interrupted, and cannot detail the painful ſtory of his death. It was a ſad termination indeed, but not ſelf-urged: ſuch a man could not be ſo utterly forſaken. He has haunted me ever ſince I came here. I ſhall never open a book of his without a pang. What a tranſition, from the perſon I have been deſcribing, to thoſe I have juſt left! You muſt remember a good-natured, giddy, but very genteel looking youth, who was in town laſt winter, a relation of ours; he is the heir of a very long anceſtry, a very ſmall patrimony, with abundance of *original sin* attached to it, and of two of the beſt old people in the world. Though theſe good people cared for nothing earthly but each other, and their children, and lived in as primitive and frugal a manner as Baucis and Philemon, they long ſtruggled vainly with their incumbrances. At length they began to get above water, and actually built the ſhell of a houſe, to be finiſhed by young hopeful (for a highland manſion is generally the work of two generations). This conſummation, ſo devoutly

devoutly to be wiſhed, was to take place when the ſaid heir began to thrive in ſome lucrative profeſſion, or by ſome wealthy match, to which it was ſuppoſed his fine figure and family pretenſions might entitle him. He has, in the mean time, a younger but cleverer brother in the army.

But, mark the ſequel. A very little, very pretty, and very thoughtleſs girl, the daughter of a neighhouring gentleman, came home from the boarding-ſchool, as uſual, very full of dreſs, vanity, and muſic: ſhe was ſcarce ſixteen, quite childiſh looking, and in frocks. Hower, couſin and ſhe met, and, in two or three days acquaintance, ſung, and played, and romped, and trifled themſelves into matrimony. No fortune to compenſate this raſh act, what ſhould the good old people do?—Juſt brought them home with all the patience imaginable; and here they are, and often I am told they come; 'tis quite a ſecond home; their own is half a mile off. How I ſhall be teaſed! yet conſcience ſays I ſhould like my kindred, and they are moſt obliging; but I feel ſomething revolting, when people

people love me dearly at firſt ſight. I can't love others ſo, my mind ſhrinks from ſtrangers. Then how ſhould they like me at once? I am ſure our old friend muſt tire of the incurſions of theſe nothing-doing people. I am vexed to ſee that Mary is fondly intimate with them. Say they are quite harmleſs, as I dare ſay they may be, they favour her own bent too much. Good night, I am very tired; but you know my day, from five in the morning till midnight, admits of doing much to make me ſo.

LETTER VI.

TO MISS REID, GLASGOW.

Oban, May 3, 1773.

I WROTE letters of duty in the morning, walked out all the forenoon, except a ſhort time I ſpent with the ſweeteſt of children and her father; and now I ſhall account to you for the remaining hours. After dinner we left our two old gentlemen together, and

ſet

ſet out for S——: the walk S——ward is charming. It is a ſweet place, ſheltered by a ſmall hill; a brook fringed with willows and alder runs by it; beautiful meadows lie below, and towering mountains riſe oppoſite. I never ſaw a place of a more paſtoral aſpect. I love the good old people: there is ſomething ſo artleſs, primitive, and benevolent about them. I think I could gueſs them, by their looks, to be what every one deſcribes them. Do you know the Highlanders reſemble the French, in being poor with a better grace than other people. If they want certain luxuries or conveniences, they do not look embaraſſed, or diſconcerted, and make you feel awkward by paltry apologies, which you don't know how to anſwer; they rather diſmiſs any ſentiment of that kind by a kind of playful raillery, for which they ſeem to have a talent. Our viſit, if not a pleaſant, was at leaſt a merry one. The moment tea was done, dancing began. Excellent dancers they are, and in muſic of various kinds they certainly excel. The floor is not yet laid, but that was no impediment

impediment. People hereabouts when they have good anceſtry, education, and manners, are ſo ſupported by the conſciouſneſs of thoſe advantages, and the credit allowed for them, that they ſeem not the leaſt diſconcerted at the deficiency of the goods of fortune; and I give them great credit for their ſpirit and contentment, though it ſhould provoke the appellation of poor and proud, which vulgar minds are ſo ready to apply to them. Is it not a bleſſed thing that there yet exiſts a place where poverty is reſpectable, and deprived of its ſting? O this incurable diſeaſe of wandering! I will return to my deſcription, which I broke off on the ebb ſhore. Behind the houſe, then, is an excellent, though as yet, infant, garden, for this is quite a new eſtabliſhment; a range of offices ſtretch along the ſhore on each ſide; the king's wherry and other boats, and ſuch veſſels as may chance to arrive, lie a little weſtward, and animate the ſpot where the joint wiſdom of the Duke and the Collector have projected a future village, the rudi-

ments of which already begin to appear*. From this choſen ſpot, where a large brook diſcharges itſelf into the ſea, a peaceful, long, green valley† opens from the ſhore, of which the Duke has given an advantageous leaſe to the Collector, who is a great favourite. The cottages lie in cluſters on the ſides of the ſloping hills, or in ſequeſtered nooks, below rocks interſperſed with patches of earth, tufted with yellow broom, or mountain aſh, which nod ſo wildly! And the people have ſo much the air of loving and helping each other! and their goats are ſuch familiar, fanciful looking creatures! I am ſo fond of the kids, that dance and friſk with ſo much humour and meaning, and cry ſo like children, I would fain have one of them follow me tame, and am ſadly diſtreſſed when I muſt needs eat them. I think if ever I run wild on the rocks, which at times

* This village is now become a very flouriſhing one.

† Glenſhealeach, or the Vale of Willows, is the name of this verdant and paſtoral glen.

I feel

I feel much inclined to, I will not be a ſhepherdeſs, but a goatherdeſs. Theſe creatures have more ſenſe and ſpirit than heavy-headed ſheep; they differ juſt as highlanders do from plodding lowlanders.—To return once more. On the other ſide of the houſe, and within a ſmall diſtance of it, riſes a hill quite detached from all others, and as like a ſugar-loaf, as if the reſemblance had been deſigned by art. It is ſmall, compared to the lofty heights that overlook it. The fine proſpect ſeen from the houſe, is commanded to great advantage from this little eminence. I climb'd to the very ſummit, which we ſhould call high, but it is nothing here. There I found a white ſcallop ſhell, a diminutive of thoſe uſed at Fingal's feaſts. I was quite glad, thinking it a moſt orthodox ſhell, left by the deluge; but was ſo laughed at—and very juſtly, when I think of it; for it would, in that caſe, have mouldered to lime a thouſand years ago. Well, I hope this will be a leſſon againſt being poſitive and conceited. Good night; I go to church to-morrow. Now I think of it, I will not go to ſleep

without finiſhing what I have ſo often begun. Of the fine views from this ſpot, I cannot enumerate the iſlands I ſee, nor the groups of fantaſtic dark blue mountains, riſing in others, too diſtant for diſtinction. Juſt ſuch a proſpect, I dare ſay, Ulyſſes had from the heights of his dear rocky Ithaca; he looked on Zante and Cephalonia, as I do on Mull and Tiree. Some of theſe iſles are inhabited by one gentleman, his family and a few tenants. What an undiſturbed little kingdom, and how happy one could make every ſubject of it! What an exile, what a priſon, would ſuch a ſea-girt domain prove to ſome crowd-dependent people we know!

Mary is, and will be down ſtairs, getting flattery and comical ſea ſtories, of which ſhe has a great many, that are too much in the ſtyle of theſe inferior regions. Good night again.

LETTER VII.

TO MISS REID.

Oban, May 5, 1773.

KILMORE, where we heard ſermon, is four miles off, at leaſt, being three of highland computation. It is by no means a Jewiſh ſabbath that is kept here; it would be bold even to call it ſtrictly a Chriſtian one; be that as it may, it is a very cheerful one. We ſet out on horſeback in a ſhower of ſnow, which people here mind no more than hair powder. It hinders nothing. We picked up the young couple at S. whoſe unmeaning mirth made me grave, and ſet me on pondering. Yet, when I obſerved the perpetual flow of ſpirits that buoys up the emptineſs of——I revered the goodneſs of Providence in making people happy at ſo ſmall an expence of intellect. I am not ſure but their lot would be pre-eminent, were they all as innocent as my good-natured couſin.

But their imbecility makes them tools to the wicked and designing; so that I believe 'tis as well to have some reflection, after all. This was an odd old church, almost ruinous. But when the preacher came in*, he roused all my attention. I never beheld a countenance so keenly expressive, nor such dark piercing eyes: he is very like his sister, F. M.†, and resembles her in a superior musical genius, being a distinguished composer, as well as performer, on the violin. When I began to look about, the dresses and countenances of the people presented new matter of speculation. This is certainly a fine country to grow old in; I could not spare a look to the young people, so much was I engrossed in contemplating their grandmothers. They preserve the form of dress worn some hundred years ago. Stately, erect, and self-satisfied, without a trace of the languor or coldness of age, they march

* The Rev. Peter Macdonald, Minister of Kilmore, still living; distinguished for musical talents.

† Flora Macdonald.

up

up the area, with gaudy coloured plaids faſtened about their breaſts with a ſilver broach, like the full moon in ſize and ſhape. They have a peculiar lively blue eye, and a fair freſh complexion. Round their heads is tied the very plain kerchief Mrs. Page alludes to, when Falſtaff tells her how well ſhe would become a *Venetian tire*; and on each cheek depends a ſilver lock, which is always cheriſhed and conſidered, not improperly, as a kind of decoration. Theſe you muſt obſerve were the common people; the old *ladies* were habited in the coſtume of the year one. I was trying to account for the expreſſion in the countenances of theſe cheerful ancients (many above fourſcore) while the paſtor with vehement animation was holding forth in the native tongue. Now here is the reſult: people who are for ever conſecrating the memory of the departed, and hold the virtues, nay, the faults of their anceſtors, in ſuch blind veneration, ſee much to love and revere in their parents, that others never think of. They accumulate on theſe patriarchs all the virtues of their

progenitors, and think the united ſplendour reflects a luſtre on themſelves. The old people, treated with unvaried tenderneſs and veneration, feel no diminution of their conſequence, no chill in their affections. Strangers to neglect, they are alſo ſtrangers to ſuſpicion. The young readily give to old age that cordial, by which they hope to be ſupported when their own almond trees begin to bloſſom. But fine people do not ſeem ever to think they ſhall be old. Now in their way, I ſhould love my father not merely as ſuch, but becauſe he was the ſon of the wiſe and pious Donald, whoſe memory the whole pariſh of Craigniſh venerates, and the grandſon of the gallant Archibald, who was the talleſt man in the diſtrict, who could throw the *putting* ſtone farther than any Campbell living, and never held a Chriſtmas without a deer of his own killing, four Fingalian greyhounds at his fire-ſide, and ſixteen kinſmen ſharing his feaſt. Shall I not be proud of a father, the ſon of ſuch fathers, of whoſe fame he is the living record? Now, what is my caſe is every other highlander's;

highlander's; for we all contrive to be wonderfully happy in our anceſtry; and by this means, the ſages here get a great deal of reverence and attention, not uſually paid to the ſtruldbruggs of other countries. Obſerve, moreover, that they ſerve for ſong books, and circulating libraries, ſo faithfully do they preſerve, and ſo accurately detail, "the tales of the times of old" and the ſongs of the bards that now ſtrike the viewleſs harp on wandering clouds. All this, with their conſtant cheerfulneſs, make them the delight of the *very young*, in the happy period of wonder and ſimplicity; and finding themſelves ſo, prevents their being peeviſh, or querulous. Oſſian was never more miſtaken than when he ſaid, "Age is dark and unlovely;" here it appears "like the ſetting moon on the weſtern wave," and we bleſs the brightneſs of its departure. I was waked out of the pleaſing reverie which the ſight of ſo many fine ancients inſpired, by the beadle's coming to the ſeat to aſk if I had Gaelic, becauſe if I had not, there was to be an Engliſh diſcourſe. Judge of my ſelf-

importance, in having a ſermon preached for my very ſelf. Poor ſouls! will you ever compare yourſelves to me again? Meg M.*, when ſhe was compoſing her meditation upon "Worm Jacob, threſhing the Mountains," had not a higher idea of the conſequence of her ſingle, ſinful, ſoul. A new and very amuſing ſcene opened, when ſervice was over: we were uſhered into a kind of public houſe, where it ſeems all the genteel part of the congregation (and very genteel ſome of them were) uſually meet, converſe, and take refreſhment, while their horſes are preparing, &c. M. Glenſenchan and I met joyfully. I recognized her new bluſh-coloured luſtring, as ſoon as I went into church, but at ſuch exhibitions I no longer wonder. The *Kirk* here, is literally accounted a public place, and frequented from very different motives. People *not ſingularly pious*, croſs ferries, and ride great diſtances in bad weather, not ſolely, I fear,

* Meg Merriſon, a conceited bigot in low life, who uſed to compoſe and ſell what ſhe called her Meditations, one of which had the above title.

to

to hear the glad tidings in church, but to meet friends in this good-humored, kindly way, after ſermon, who can tell them all about their eighteenth couſins in India and America. The converſation is in a ſtyle ſo different from what you are uſed to—

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All this is very animated, and I contrive to be much intereſted. There is little ſcandal; for ſcandal is the dregs and ſediment of converſation, after better things have been diſcuſſed; and we talk ſo much of the dead, that the living eſcape. Your belles and beaux would not reliſh this, for there is no chance of being admired by the dead. I am reſolved for my part, to die in the Highlands, that I may avoid the ſudden oblivion which ſwallows up the departed among poliſhed people, who diſguiſe ſelfiſhneſs under the pretence of not being able to endure to have their fine feelings diſturbed with the mention of the dead.

Honeſt *Donald* feels no ſuch repugnance, but calls up the joy of grief in tender me-

ditation; cheriſhes the memory of his fathers, "and walks in the light of their renown."

"Why ſhould I ſpeak of General Chumley,
And Mr. Muſter-maſter Gumley?"
Vide Bathos.

Why ſhould I introduce you to the cynoſure of the aſſembly, the old major, with his tartan coat, his large ſilver buttons, worn in Montroſe's wars by his grandfather, and his redundant ſilver locks adorning a countenance, the picture of health and benignity? Nor will you care a farthing for his three thin upright ſiſters, though they are, amidſt their oddity, very like mountain gentlewomen; nor for his nine couſins, taſteleſs thing that you are. Among this ſingular groupe, were ſome very well bred, faſhionable looking people, who had been abroad in the world, without being ſpoiled by it, and treated their antiquated ruſtic relations with a reſpect and kindneſs which was both amiable and exemplary. If I were to ſtay and frequent this church a twelvemonth, hearing

hearing and retaining as I generally do, I doubt not that I might be qualified to compile the heraldry of Lorn, ſo ſkilled ſhould I become in its antiquities.

The ſun ſhone on our ſocial repaſt, but when we ſet out, Eolus did not perform the taſk Thomſon aſſigns him in the opening of ſpring; inſtead of "calling off his ruffian blaſts," he let them looſe in great fury, and the demolition of my new hat awakened my remorſe for making ſo merry with poor Smelfungus's misfortune of the ſame kind. Blinded with ſnow, and in inſtant danger of "mounting the whirlwind's wing," we were accoſted by a moſt reſpectable looking gentleman, who brought us into his houſe; which ſeemed the choſen reſidence of comfort;—ſo they told me, for I could look at nothing but the miſtreſs of the manſion, ſhe had been ſo very handſome, and was ſtill ſo very engaging: her countenance had ſo much ſoul in it, her perſon and demeanour were ſo graceful, and her manner ſo graciouſly kind. The Collector ſays, ſhe is all her appearance promiſes; I felt ſorry when I thought

I thought I might never ſee her again. After all,

" What's Hecuba to me, or I to Hecuba?"

My friends laughed and talked louder than the ſtorm, all the way home; I was loſt in lofty meditation, and, to own the truth, writing this letter in idea; and then I was ſo glad to find myſelf at this fireſide, with the ſweet little girl in my arms.

I am going to bid good night to the moon; the ſtorm is over, the undulating waters are like living light, while the ſame beams repoſe ſo ſweetly on the ſhadowy ſides of far-ſeen mountains, that ariſe in diſtant iſles.

" —— in ſuch a night,
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild ſea bank, and wav'd her love
To come again to Carthage."

Ungrateful cur that he was. Adieu! may you never wave a willow, or ſpend a good day as idly as I have done this. It is paſt midnight, and remorſe is preying on me. Adieu! again, my deareſt.

LETTER VIII.

TO MISS REID.

Oban, May, 1773.

Now, my dear Harriet, I have commenced a bad cuſtom both to you and myſelf! I write ſo minutely, that when I ſettle and have ſomething elſe to do, I muſt needs be conciſe, and then you will think me careleſs; but you muſt not, for my manner of writing to you is ſo like our old wandering chit-chat, that I fly to it as Lizzy does to her ſnuff-box, and this ſo often, that I neglect thoſe I ought to like and attend to, and would attend to, if I did not feel as if I had you always in a corner to run to. I will not write theſe two days, unleſs a little matter of fact before breakfaſt, and a goſſipping whiſper at bed-time. My taſte for ſolitary amuſement, and indifference to the volatile chit-chat of ſome people, begin to excite much obſervation. Shake off the imputation as we pleaſe, every

one

one has their own mode of ſelfiſhneſs, and I feel mine to be that of running away to my ſolitary pleaſures. I repent, will mortify myſelf, and

"Do penance in gay young company."

Midnight.

I am reformed, and amended, but cannot fatigue myſelf or you with the deſcription of this day; you will find it in Thomſon.

"Deceitful, vain, and void, paſſes the day."

Why ſhould I ſpeak with peeviſhneſs, of good-humoured, harmleſs people, who ſhow a wiſh to pleaſe me? Why am I not pleaſed with trifles, when the beſt of us are doomed to paſs great part of our lives in a manner which our own reflections muſt call trifling; but then I ſhould like to trifle in my own way. I could play half a day with ſweet little Anne, or even with a ſportive kitten, or puppy: I could gather ſhells and ſea-weed on the ſhore, or venture my neck for neſts, which I would not plunder after finding them; nay, I could talk nonſenſe as we uſed to do, and laugh heartily at vagaries of our own con-

contriving. But their nonſenſe I can't for my life reliſh: they think it wit, and I can't accredit it as ſuch. Then they think cunning wiſdom, and miſtake ſimplicity for folly. Very rural all this! Here is goſſipping for you with a witneſs. Do not think that I indulge myſelf in the conceit of not caring for any body, unleſs they have the taſte for reading, which great leiſure and ſolitude, in a manner, forced upon me. But I would have people love truth and nature; I would have them look a little into the great book which their Maker has left open to every body. I would have the riſing and ſetting ſun, the bloſſoming trees and opening flowers, give them the ſame pleaſure, which many taſte, without knowing their alphabet. O! when, or where ſhall I ſee another Harriet, uncultured and untaught, yet awake to all that is grand or beautiful in nature, all that is excellent or deſirable in knowledge—whoſe intuitive ſenſe of what is delicate and proper, is worth volumes of inſtruction! The more I know of others, the more I regret you; and the beſt uſe I ever

ever could make of the knowledge which I have accidentally acquired, would be to impreſs it on the fair tablet of your ſpotleſs mind. Good night, my dear; I am neither very well nor very eaſy. I have got cold in theſe meadowy traverſes. My father and mother go away to-morrow. Were it not for the dear old man, and his little girl, and his library, I would go too. Write to me here, and never mind incorrectneſs; you will daily improve; or, though you ſhould not,

"Thou haſt no faults, or I no faults can ſpy,
Thou art all beauty, or all blindneſs I."

LETTER IX.

TO MISS REID.

Fort William, May 12, 1773.

Be aſtoniſhed, Oh! Harriet, for here I am. Aſk why I am here, and I can only tell you it was owing to the ſtrangeſt caprice. Yet, ſo it is, and you know I do not uſe to be

be fickle. The day after I wrote to you, it was ſettled that my father and mother were to proceed in the king's wherry, "Mark that, Mary Jones." Two o'clock was the hour fixed. Mary propoſed a forenoon walk, I went reluctantly, on condition of not paſſing the boundary rivulet on the way to S. There ſhe lingered with teaſing perſeverance; hoping, no doubt, that ſome of our friends would appear. At length I would go, fearing my parents might go without ſeeing me. The firſt object that met my eyes, croſſing the hill, was his majeſty's wherry going full ſail up the Bay. I grew cold as lead; I felt the oddeſt ſenſation: ſurpriſe and remorſe for being away, and a ſtrange forlorn feeling I cannot expreſs, ſtupified me for a few moments, and then my eyes filled and I was relieved. Yet I felt as if I were alone in the world, and cared for nothing. After dinner there came a ſudden violent blaſt, with drift and ſqualls. The Collector retired to write, and I to the library.

Juſt as we all met at tea, lamenting the ſad

ſad evening, there came an outcry from below, that the wherry was ſeen returning. I was ſo agitated—in ſhort, the ſtorm had driven them back, and I was ſeized with the ſtrongeſt deſire to go with them; I knew I ſhould miſs many pleaſures I had promiſed myſelf, that, for inſtance, of ſeeing Kitty Macalman, whom I like better than any one ever I knew from this quarter; 'twas odds if I ſhould get away till the end of ſummer; I had loſt all influence over Mary's mind, and I ſaw clearly ſhe was in hands I could not take her out of: ſo far from profiting by advice, I knew ſhe would hate me for adviſing her: ſhe might ſink into vulgarity or folly, but why ſhould I grieve myſelf with ſeeing what I could not mend? I knew the Collector would be ſorry to part with me. I hope it was not cunning, but delicacy, that made me beg my mother to ſay that ſhe had changed her mind, and would not leave me. How my heart pined for the ſweet little girl! I ſhould have delighted to take her with me, and make a little ſiſter of her.

We

We came off at five next morning, for then the tide made. Poor Mary was not ſo indifferent as I thought. After we had parted, while the boat was putting off, ſhe ſprung, as from a ſudden impulſe, on a great ſtone, and from thence to the boat again; ſhe ſilently embraced me, with a tear on her cheek. If we never meet again I ſhall remember this as ominous, for Mary is unuſed to the melting mood. I thought ſhe never looked ſo pretty: what a fine face her's would be with ſuitable expreſſion!

The morning was clear, though cold; I enjoyed very much the views on each ſide, betwixt Mull and the coaſt, and ſaw the old caſtles of Dunolly and Dunſtaffnage on rocks projecting into the ſea, and many other places of old renown. Do you know, the Collector, who knows but every thing, ſays, Robert Bruce held a parliament in Dunſtaffnage, where all the barons ſpoke Gaelic. We came paſt the pleaſant and fertile iſland of Leſmore, a name ſignifying a large garden, and on the other ſide ſaw the coaſt of Appin, rich in early verdure and

and ſheltered with groves of oak. The ſcenery is various and beautiful. This eſtate is at preſent poſſeſſed by a gentleman of taſte and liberality*, who has improved it exceedingly, and, though not a native, ſeems very much attached to the place. He has built a ſtately manſion on it, and, being an enthuſiaſt in regard to antiquities, and a lover of nature, is regarded by the people with as fond an attachment as any of their native chiefs. He is indeed, they ſay, very good and kind to them. I never ſaw a place that had more attractions for me; 'tis wild without being ſavage; woody, but not gloomy; and fertile, but not flat. I wiſh I were to go no further; I ſhould like to tend a flock of goats among thoſe picturesque crags that form the back-ground of that fine picture. A contrary wind gave me leiſure to ſurvey theſe beauties, but cold rain and driving blaſts coming on, his majeſty's own wherry was in danger of being overſet, like a common boat; and his majeſty's own officer began to be afraid, like

* Henry Seaton, Eſq. ſince dead.

any

any other man. I feared nothing but cold and wet, yet was very glad when I heard a propoſal of hauling in to ſhore, which we did oppoſite to Appin, at the foot of a ſteep green hill, on the ſide of which was a dwelling newly erected, not ſumptuous, but, by its neat outſide and ſaſhed windows, diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the common people. We climbed the hill, and were received with a kind of ſtately civility by a tall, thin, erect perſon, a widow,—pale, wan, and woe-begone. She never aſked who we were, till a good fire and moſt comfortable tea-drinking, with many other good things, put us in humour to make replies. She aſked my mother if we were connected with the country. Now we had juſt left my father's country, and entered my mother's. She told the good lady her whole genealogy, by no means omitting the Invernaheyle family, on which the old lady roſe with great ſolemnity, crying, "All the water in the ſea cannot waſh your blood from mine." This tender embrace was ſucceeded by a long diſſertation on the Invernaheyle family, &c.

I went

There is an adventure for you, which will form a ſuitable concluſion to this important epiſtle. Adieu! for the preſent.

LETTER X.

TO MISS REID, GLASGOW.

Fort William, May 14, 1773.

THE hoſpitable matron who received us ſo kindly, is, alas! a childleſs widow, yet not poor, as poverty is underſtood here; and I really think the ſtandard is better fixed than with you. Is it not due to Providence, to ſay one is eaſy, having every neceſſary and ſome comforts? I ſhould like elegance dearly, if ſhe were not ſo nearly allied to luxury—and luxury too I could tolerate, if ſhe were not ſo abominably ſelfiſh. I can never believe that a being, whoſe wants are endleſs and numberleſs, can ſpare even a thought to the wants of others. Very luxurious people do ſome

ſome charitable things, but they are induced to do them by vanity, example, or ſolicitation. You always hear of heroiſm and great exertions of all kinds in poor countries. Patience and fortitude, the virtues our helpleſs ſtate moſt needs, are the growth of barren ſoils. I always delighted in Gray's Ode to Adverſity; read it once again, and compare its ennobling tenor with my ideas. It is happy I think ſo: if wealth was every thing to me, as it is to many you know, it would make me miſerable to ſee ſo many deſerving creatures what you would call very poor; but they do not think themſelves ſo, and therefore they are not ſo.—I know nothing ſo ſilly as the diſguſt and wonder your cockney Miſſes ſhew at any cuſtom or dreſs they are not uſed to. I now think plaids and faltons (fillets) juſt as becoming as I once did the furs and wampum of the Mohawks, whom I always remember with kindneſs.

As this long digreſſion cannot much pleaſe, I hope it will greatly improve you. We landed on the weſt ſide, and to ſave

ſailing round a long point, reſolved to walk to Ballachueliſh* by the light of the moon: it was a bleak evening, and the wind whiſtled dolefully while we were paſſing, in utter darkneſs, through a ſmall wood; the moon broke through a cloud, and the owl began to hoot moſt opportunely. I ſtarted, and was ſhewn the cairn (or *rude monument* of looſe ſtones) where Campbell of Glenure had been murdered, and where every paſſenger throws a ſtone. I can't convey to you the impreſſion, which this aſſemblage of gloomy images made at once on my mind, aided by the recollection that a worthy and innocent gentleman, related to my mother, ſuffered death in conſequence: though it appeared afterwards, the murder was committed by a ſoldier in the French ſervice, who lurked in the country ſince the year 1745, for that purpoſe. The eulogium and hiſtory of this victim of prejudice, kept our attention engaged till we reached

* An eſtate on the northern border of Argyleſhire; poſſeſſed by a relation of the Author.

Bal-

Ballachueliſh. The lady was not at home; I was ſorry for it. She is a perſon of more than common underſtanding and virtue, whom I greatly eſteem. She has built a fruit wall, a thing before unheard of here, and does much good among the common people, with the productions of her garden, where ſhe has medical herbs, which ſhe ſhews much ſkill and humanity in applying to their proper uſes. I have changed my mind about herding goats, and now the reſult of my moonlight meditation in the wood, and my reflections on this good lady's well-earned praiſe, have determined me to ſeek forthwith,

> "A hairy gown and narrow cell,
> Where I may ſit and nightly ſpell,
> Of every ſtar that heaven doth ſhew,
> And every herb that ſips the dew."

What fine tranſitions one might make, from the bright eye of the celeſtial bull, to the ſoft eye of the terreſtrial daiſy, by thus ſtudying ſtars and herbs together. A pair of hermits, were that poſſible, would be a

double felicity; but, perhaps, I may ſee ſomething to-morrow, at my grandfather's which may ſuggeſt a new mode of life to me. But, whether nun, goat-herd, herbaliſt, or ſtar-gazer, depend on my being unalterably yours.

LETTER XI.

TO MISS REID.

Fort William, May 17, 1773.

I DARE ſay I am the more prejudiced againſt this place, becauſe I was brought here ſo ſoon againſt my inclination. The young ladies of Glencoe, with whom I have a remote connection, and who were at the dancing-ſchool with me the firſt winter I was in Scotland, (and great companions for the time we were,) ſent urgent invitations, and were within two hours ride. I ſhould have liked very much to ſee them; the youngeſt is a fine creature,—all heart and ſoul, without a thought to hide. Glencoe ſhe has often deſcribed to me as very ſingular

gular in its appearance and ſituation;—a glen ſo narrow, ſo warm, ſo fertile, ſo overhung by mountains, which ſeem to meet above you,—with ſides ſo ſhrubby and woody!—the haunt of roes, and numberleſs ſmall birds. They told me it was unequalled for the chorus of "wood notes wild," that reſounded from every ſide. The ſea is ſo near that its roar is heard, and its productions abound. It was always accounted (for its narrow bounds) a place of great plenty and ſecurity. In this romantic retreat where a blue ſtream bends its courſe, with a half circular ſweep, through the moſt peaceful and ſecluded of narrow vales, the matchleſs melody of the ſweet voice of Cona firſt awaked the joy of grief. On that account you may well believe the glen is peopled with images, that are "pleaſant, yet mournful to the ſoul." Why did I not go there to meet the fair ſpirit of Malvina in the haunt of roes? Happy daughter of Toſcar! to have thy ſpotleſs faith, thy virtuous ſorrows, and thy ſoul-inſpired beauties, immortalized in the ſublime and tender ſtrains

of thy heroic friend! Thrice happy to have the heavenly employment of pouring the balm of ſympathy into wounds of the heart, that could not be cloſed; of ſupporting the feeble ſteps of age and blindneſs; of ſoothing, with the melting muſic of thy voice, and the ſoft ſound of thy plaintive harp, the ſorrows of the venerable bard, and of hearing him awake thoſe divine ſtrains, that conſecrate to future ages, the fame of thy generous hero, and all thy mild graces and gentle virtues!

Daughter of Toſcar! dear and frequent to my nightly viſions, come, like a moon-beam, to the chamber of my repoſe! I wiſh, with all my heart, that I could deſign and paint like Angelica. Then would I give "a combination and a form indeed," to the beautiful image that exiſts in my mind, of the fair mourner of Lutha. The ſweet ſadneſs of her eyes you ſhould only imagine; I would not have then profaned by vulgar gaze; ſhe ſhould ſit on the ground beſide the prince of bards, her white arm thrown careleſsly over her ſilent harp;

harp; ſhe ſhould look penſively down, as fixed in tender recollection. Her thick locks, blown aſide from her fair forehead, as by the autumnal gale, ſhould by chance, as it were, diſplay the penſive grace, marking thoſe fine formed brows from which ſhe took her name; her beauty ſhould appear faſt fading like the many-coloured foliage on the back ground, and mild compoſure ſhould denote a ſoul that feels a ſad enjoyment in its ſufferings, and would not purchaſe eaſe at the price of oblivion. Humbler purſuits and duties are wiſely aſſigned to me. In conformity to that deſignation, which was certainly meant for my happineſs, I ſhall come down to the ſafer walks of common life, and tell you the ſad ſtory that has made this glen frequent in the ſongs of modern bards, and has even found its way to the page of hiſtory, to blot it with crimes unequalled in our age and country.

But, firſt, that you may eſtimate duly the renown of this little glen, I muſt tell you what a tuneful and warlike tribe inhabited it. The tribe of Macdonalds, called Mac

Jans*, or ſons of John, who dwelt in this ſequeſtered ſpot, were all, as the country people ſay, born poets; and this belief was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that, if a Mac Jan could not rhyme, his legitimacy was called in queſtion: whatever his other merits might be, he was no genuine Mac Jan. This is not only very ſtrange, but very true; but I think we may credit it, on the principle of the old bye-word, "Bode a gown of gowd and ye'll aye get the ſleeve of it†." The firſt poſſeſſors of this peaceful retreat, were led to take a powerful intereſt in the ſongs of Selma, by the proud conſciouſneſs of dwelling in the ſpot made ſacred by the birth of the tuneful hero. The profound ſecluſion in which they lived, encouraged meditation; the noble objects which ſurrounded them, and ſhut out the world, ſublimed it. The plenty their retreat afforded to their hunting and fiſhing purſuits afforded leiſure for the

* The name ſhould be printed thus: Macian.

† A proverb, indicating, that a ſtrong confidence of ſucceſs will, at leaſt, procure a degree of the object aſpired to.

Muſe.

Muſe. Poetry was univerſally familiar, where every eminent character rejoiced and mourned in meaſured ſtrains. All the moſt obvious images, phraſes, and rhymes grew ſo common, that nothing could be eaſier than ſtringing rhymes together like thoſe you have ſeen me get from —— and ——, who, I doubt not, thought it incumbent on them to be poetical, as well as the Mac Jans. Roſalind ſays, in As you like it, "I could rhyme you ſo for a year together;—dinners, and ſuppers, and ſleeping-times excepted." Whether it was by thoſe mechanic means, or by ſuperior powers of imagination, it appears this tuneful tribe claimed all the reſpect due to ſuperior talents; to which was added, that paid to diſtinguiſhed courage. When they were induced by the fatal feuds, ſo common in old times, to attack any other tribe, it was not eaſy to purſue them into their retreats; and then they ſallied forth again with the hardineſs produced by impunity. Thus they became fearleſs themſelves, and feared by others. To be conciſe, they were always

with the Stuarts, their neighbour clan, and againſt their opponents, which, in the end, provoked no common vengeance. In the year 1694, or later, it was required, that all heads of tribes, in that diſtrict, ſhould take the oaths to Government at Inverary. Now this was a hard pill; for the highlanders could never forgive King William for dethroning his uncle. 'Twas quite out of their ſtyle of doing injuries; and the reaſons for ſo doing were beyond their comprehenſion. Probably Mac Jan was not in the leaſt ſorry that a violent ſtorm made the mountains impaſſable about the laſt days of grace; ſo he made a declaration before ſome magiſtrate at Fort William, that he would have gone to take the oaths, if he could. This informality was ſeized on as a pretext, by ſome enemy whom he had in the army, whoſe anceſtors had probably ſuffered from the fury of a Glencoe irruption. A company marched out, from the Fort, under pretence of quartering in the glen, till the oaths were taken. They were received with the moſt hoſpitable kindneſs; the officers

officers were lodged in Glenco's houſe; the ſoldiers with his tenants. This happened in the joyous days of Chriſtmas, when it is, if ever, that theſe people have plenty and good cheer. Glenco was not well, but ſat up and played at cards the laſt night, out of courteſy to the officers. At midnight the ſoldiers got the word of command; every man went in and ſhot his hoſt, and then bayonetted the boys and old people. It was a clear froſty night. The diſcharges of ſhot through the echoing glen alarmed thoſe who had given up their beds to their gueſts, and ſlept in bye places. Of theſe I cannot exactly recollect how many eſcaped to the mountain, to ſuffer every extremity of cold, hunger, grief, and fear. I have not nerves for the whole detail; ſuffice it, that Glenco's laſt breath was ſpent in a devout aſpiration; that his ſuperannuated father was murdered in his bed, by an enſign, whoſe name ſhould never be pronounced, or written; and that his eldeſt ſon, in his eighth year, was ſtabbed by the ſame ruffian, when on his knees, imploring mercy.

The preſent Laird, grandfather to my young friends, was an infant two years old, and was carried off to the hills, by his nurſe, unobſerved. The only other male in the chief's houſe who eſcaped was the bard; I am ſure he did not, like Phemius, cry out, "O ſpare the poet's ever gentle mind;" nor, by any means, owe his ſafety to his tuneful powers; but, as every ſhift had been made to accommodate the ſtrangers, he ſlept in ſome odd corner. Next day there was neither ſmoke ſeen, nor voice heard in this cloſe-peopled glen, which before contained about three hundred inhabitants. The bard ſat alone upon a rock, and, looking down, compoſed a long diſmal ſong, which I would give all my ear-rings to underſtand. They ſay it has not much poetical merit. No wonder—"Small heart had he to ſing." Now you are waiting to hear with a ſavage delight, of the puniſhments inflicted on thoſe midnight aſſaſſins, and the exemplary vengeance that purſued their cruel chief. No ſuch matter; the cry of blood reſounded over all Europe, and the hero of

Naſſau

Naſſau heard it, as if he heard it not. This was a great blot in his character; but, no doubt, he had been made to believe, that Glenco was ſome ſanguinary monſter, who lived by rapine. Princes adjuſt their accounts of this kind very eaſily; it is but calling people ſavages, and then their blood is of no value, and their lives of no conſequence.

Why ſhould a muſical, poetical, and patriarchal highland chief fare better than the Incas of Peru, "where dwelt the gentleſt children of the Sun."

William was a hero after all. But authority, pure at the ſource, is often poiſoned in the channels. Yet, though he could not remedy the evil, he ought to have avenged it. Now you would know how the chief agent in this villainy ended. He died at a ripe age, abundantly proſperous. But who ſaw his nightly viſions, or felt his ſecret pangs? The Judge of all the earth never fails to do right, though we cannot always ſee how.

Satiate with blood, I bid you good night. It is very poſſible, I am going to occupy the

the ſame room the *Ensign* ſlept in, when he returned from the depopulated glen; he will, may be, come and ſmile on me, like the blood-ſmeared Banquo.

" From fairies, and the tempters of the night,
Guard me good angels."

I am awake, and have not ſeen the enſign. Let his memory periſh, as well as that of all the wretches who perverted mercy, and abuſed authority in this place. Of the many ſhocking details I have been pained with, I ſhall only recite one. There was an Engliſh major, who, in the abſence of the governor, commanded the garriſon in the diſmal year 1746. There was, at that time, after much previous *severity*, a free pardon offered to all the lower claſs, who would deliver up their arms; thoſe found with weapons in their poſſeſſion had no mercy to expect.

After ſupper, when the commandant and his officers were enjoying their bowl in this houſe, the ſerjeant of the guard came in and ſaid, there were three men brought in with their arms,—What ſhould be done with

with them? "What but hang them!" ſaid the major, impatient of diſturbance. Now this was owing to the ſerjeant's inaccuracy of expreſſion. The poor men, in fact, were coming in with their arms, to deliver them up, and, meeting one of the out-parties by the way, accompanied them to the garriſon. "When the giant awoke from his wine," it was the firſt thing he did to look out at the window; and the firſt object he ſaw, was the bodies of theſe unhappy men, hung over a mill oppoſite. He was filled with horror, not recollecting his laſt night's order. When it was explained to him that the poor creatures came to receive the proffered mercy, the intelligence threw him into a deep and laſting melancholy. My father, though of all whigs the blueſt, ſpeaks with horror of this tranſaction, and ſays he ſaw a very pretty young widow come to that mill the following winter, whoſe father, brother, and huſband, had been the ſufferers.—O! when ſhall I have ſpirits to reliſh the kindneſs I receive from very worthy people here, and give you ſome idea of Inverlochy? Diſmal, diſmal,

dismal, it appeared to me; drenched with cold rains, and covered with clouds of unusual darkness. The shore so flat and unmeaning! A long low moor spreading behind; very little verdure in sight; no peaceful vales or sweet streams; the very river Nevis to me looks gloomy and stupid; 'tis a little Acheron. Ben Nevis is a great clumsy, mountain, without any fanciful breaks, or fine marked outline, like those of Morven. It is great, without sublimity, and seems to nod above this ugly town, and shake a perpetual drizzle from its misty locks. As far as a mountain can resemble a man, it resembles the person Smollet has marked out by the name of Captain Gawky. I wonder much how any one lives here, who could live any where else.

Yet, I am told, Glenevis has rural beauties, and is very sweet and placid, when once you get into it, which I have no desire to do. The village, which stretches from the Fort, along the banks of the Lochy, is a very tolerable one, could I but think so; but this Fort, "with many a foul and mid-day

mid-day murder fed," looks juſt like a place to kill people in, 'tis ſo gloomy and uncouth: it is triangular; the ſoldiers' barracks are of wood, grown black with the conſtant rains. We are in the beſt of the officers' apartments, occupied by a very worthy family, the maſter of which holds the ſame half-military employment here, which my father is to exerciſe at Fort Auguſtus. I was not in the humour for liking theſe people if I could help it, but I find I muſt. They grow upon me every moment. Mr. Gray* is a native of the border; quite an original: harſh-looking at firſt, yet, when the ſmile of benevolence lights up his countenance, and his humour, anecdote, and obſervation begin to unfold, you would not think him the ſame perſon. Mrs. Gray is juſt recovering from illneſs; mild and beautiful I am ſure ſhe has been; and they have a little boy, more lovely than the

* Mr. Gray was Barrack-maſter, Poſt-maſter, &c. at Fort William; had large farms, trading veſſels, &c. and was in eaſy circumſtances and much reſpected.

Cupids

Cupids in the college; if he could but ſpeak, he would almoſt rival Anne the well-beloved. I ſay ſo much of people ſo new to me, becauſe they are the only objects here I can regard with any complacency. If Fort Auguſtus be ſuch a place, I will certainly become a votary of the

> "Penſive nun, devout and pure,
> Sober, ſtedfaſt, and demure."

whom we uſed to admire ſo much. Expect to ſee me when we meet,

> "With ſable ſtole of cypreſs lawn,
> O'er my decent ſhoulders drawn."

—I have no ſpite againſt this place, but I am provoked at its ſuperabundant negatives. It is a ſea-port, without being animated; it is a village, without the air of peace and ſimplicity; it is military, without being either gay, or bold looking; it is country, without being rural; it is highland, without being pictureſque or romantic; it has plains without verdure, hills without woods, mountains without majeſty, and

and a ſky without a ſun; at leaſt his beams appear ſo ſeldom, that I wonder the Lochabrians are not dazzled into idolatry, when he walks in his brightneſs—O, this is a bad country for a butterfly, a bee, or an enthuſiaſt, to expatiate in; but it is the beſt place in the world to remember an abſent friend in! "Thought ſtrays a wretched rover o'er the pleaſing paſt;" I feel the ſpark of fancy kindling at the torch of memory; but as Gray ſays of Jove's eagle, "the thunder of whoſe beak and lightning of whoſe eye were to be quenched," &c. &c. I too will quench my mental light in "dark clouds of ſlumber." Meet me in my dreams, daughter of winding Clutha! Adieu!

LETTER XII.

TO MISS REID.

Fort William, May 20, 1773.

MY DEAR H.,

I DARE say you are ready to cry out, "Lochaber no more!" and I am sure I am ready to echo the same note. Yet who ever left a happy family without regret? and I am about to leave a very happy one. Our host improves upon us every hour. He has good sense, and a good heart: and is a perfect cabinet of that sort of old-fashioned knowledge that I like. He is from near the Law of Berwick, and knows all the traditionary history of the Border; of the Humes and the Elliots. He is, in fact, a true blood old Scotsman; shrewd, cautious, and sarcastic, yet kind and affectionate where he loves.

Do you know if ever I break a resolution you *wot of*, it shall be in favour of an ugly man.

man. Ugly is a harſh word, I only mean plain looking, rather harſh, like Mr. Gray: he ſhould be much older than myſelf too. Theſe are the people likely to be moſt grateful for attention, from a perſon whoſe youth, &c. &c. might make it preſumed, that ſhe had made ſome ſacrifices. I do not ſuppoſe myſelf capable of having any thing to do with folly or knavery; but, put theſe out of the queſtion, and if I had a choice of fifty, it would not be the wiſeſt, the wittieſt, the wealthieſt, nor, by any means, the handſomeſt, that I ſhould chooſe. No; it would be the perſon capable of moſt affection, if one had ſcales that would weigh ſuch a thing. But, wanting theſe, he who, having the leaſt opinion of his dear ſelf, is likelieſt to value another: he, who, having outlived early vanity and romance, can beſt value "the ſober certainty of waking bliſs," ſuch as this good couple moſt deſervedly enjoy. She is amiable, gentle, and well-bred; a perſon of family too. He looks with ſuch calm complacency at her, and is ſo charmed with every thing ſhe ſays! The

reſpect

reſpect ſhe ſhews him, is ſo ſoftened by affection! She has a ſiſter here*, not the leaſt like her, but an excellent creature; good-hearted, frank-ſpirited and active. They all form ſuch an harmonious groupe, and the little boy is ſo lovely! There is one in the cradle too; but I only mind thoſe that can "ſoftly ſpeak, and ſweetly ſmile;" for the boy of boys has ſome pretty half-formed words. My father went on a week ago to Fort Auguſtus, to regulate matters for our removal; but his predeceſſor's family are ill of fevers. We have been urged to ſtay here till matters are in a train, but have reſolved to proceed. I am ſure I ſhall feel much concern when I go away. There is a Major C—ne here, a man of taſte and ingenuity, who pleaſes me much by the delight he takes in talking of his wife, who is certainly very pretty. He has her picture, drawn by himſelf, with a moſt angelic expreſſion. Happy artiſt! who can thus give a viſible and lovely form to the predominant image in his mind. If I could but ſing and

* Miſs Graham, ſtill living.

draw

draw true likeneſſes of my friends, I think I ſhould not be an unhappy exile, after all—I will not write another word from hence. I am buſy with a piece of work, which I mean as a memorial for ſweet Mrs. Gray; and won't beſtow a minute on you, till I ſee myſelf in Loch Neſs. Good night, my deareſt! Write, or not write, my ſpirit is with you; and I feel a pleaſure in thinking I can contribute to your amuſement.

One more adieu! *when I meet with another* that poſſeſſes your native delicacy, your diſintereſtedneſs, your purity of heart, I will forget you: forget all our paſt happineſs, and thoſe that ſhared it. Peace be with you, my own Harriet.

LETTER XIII.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, May 24, 1773.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I AM very much diſordered by my journey; but, while I am able, I ſhall endeavour to deſcribe it, for Bell as well as for you, and it is needleſs to tell you both the ſame thing.

On Monday we ſet out on horſeback, good, Mr. Gray conducting us to Highbridge; and a moſt inſtructive and entertaining companion he was. Why did I leave Lochaber without introducing you to the caſtle of Inverlochy? You never ſaw ſuch a caſtle in your life. I muſed the whole night after I ſaw it, on the ſtrange manner in which the inhabitants muſt have lived. It is large and ſquare, and has the remains of four round towers. It is built of round ſtones, that never were touched by the hammer,

mer. You may gueſs its venerable antiquity, from the circumſtance of Achaius, "our gude Scots king," having ſigned a league with Charlemagne here, in the eighth century.

Only think how kings could chooſe ſuch a reſidence; but they were great hunters, and the dark moors in view were all a foreſt then. The ſea runing up ſo far into the boſom of the mountains, was alſo a favourable circumſtance: beſides, it ſtands in the mouth of the ſingular and important Glenmore, which I ſhall hereafter deſcribe to you. It is ſomewhat ſingular that ſixteen thanes, or chiefs, of the name of Cumming, witneſſed this league.

The progreſs and declenſion of power is worth tracing; it makes no unimportant part of the hiſtory of human nature. In theſe days the Cummings were unrivalled in the north, and potent every where. The wiſdom and valour of ſome diſtinguiſhed individuals, no doubt, procured this influence at firſt. When they acquired it, they abuſed their power; by their joint influence, bore down

every other name, till, in the end, they became the objects of univerſal fear and jealouſy.

There were doubtleſs, among ſo great a number, unworthy individuals, whom the ſpirit of clanſhip led the more deſerving to protect and ſupport, in ſome inſtances of violence or fraud. This created a kind of combination againſt them; and the treachery of the *Red Cumming*, which provoked Robert the Bruce to ſtab him in the cloiſter of the Gray-friars at Dumfries, was a mortal ſtroke to their declining power.

What an aſtoniſhing inſtance it was of our great Robert's royalty of mind, that, when hunted from place to place, purſuing a precarious title to a deſpoiled crown, he could, in the glow of virtuous indignation, perform ſuch a deed in ſuch a place, without loſing all popularity! It was the blindneſs of zeal. The cruelty of the times, attended with bitter exaſperations, prevent its being a ſtain on our liberal-minded hero. Don't think I am diverted from my favourite ſtar in the galaxy of fame; I always ſee the

ſpirit

ſpirit of Wallace ſuperior and alone, like Hercules, repoſing after his labours. Do not tell me of his being bloody; no doubt he thought it was the "ſword of the Lord, and of Gideon, that he drew:" "Nothing he did in hate, but all in honour." I reverence his hallowed ſhade, as much at this preſent moment, as when we were trying to lift his two-handed ſword in Dumbarton Caſtle *.

Now I was as full of the idea of the caſtle of Inverlochy as poſſible, when theſe heroes carried me away. The ſtrength of this venerable pile is wonderful. Mr. Gray has told us how they built theſe ſtrange walls. There was a frame of boards made of their height and breadth, into which diſſolved lime and ſtones of all ſizes and ſorts were poured: when theſe conſolidated, the frame was taken away, and the wall was everlaſting. Pray thank me for your firſt leſſon in architecture, which, at any rate, will do you no harm.

* We viſited this relique the day we parted.

Now I am going to commit to your prudent ſecrecy a flight among the clouds, which I ventured in a very ſtormy day, and a very melancholy hour.

Rave on, ye demons of the ſtorm!
The ſkies diſturb, the ſeas deform,
And urge the whirling blaſt!
Commix the waves in wild uproar,
And howl along the deſert ſhore,
While nature ſhrinks aghaſt!

From the dark chambers of the ſky,
I ſee the lurid lightnings fly
With quick illuſive glance;
While thunders, murmuring from afar,
Proclaim the elemental war,
And nearer ſtill advance.

Methinks, with horrid joy elate,
Avenging miniſters of fate
Now mount the whirlwind's wing;
And, while they trace their deſtin'd path,
Tremendous pour the vial'd wrath
Of nature's awful King!

Rage on, ye blaſts! unmov'd by fear,
Your fierce conflicting ſtrife I hear;
For what have I to dread?
Not ſtorms, whoſe fury rends the ſky,
Nor thunder, pealing from on high,
Awake th' unconſcious dead.

Since

Since dead to hope, and love, and joy,
Why ſhould your pow'r my peace deſtroy,
Or break my mournful calm?
Your deepeſt baſe, your loftieſt tone,
Grateful to me, and me alone,
I feel, like ſorrow's balm.

Thus, pleas'd, the ſea-fowl cry aloud,
While, toſs'd aloft, from cloud to cloud,
With heedleſs courſe they roam;
With ſtern delight, unmix'd with care,
They wander thro' the troubled air,
Like me, without a home!

This, you ſay, is an exaggeration, for both the ſea-fowl and I ſhall find our home in due time. True; but this is the language of deep deſpondency, which aggravates every thing, and looks to no future comfort. The poetry of ſorrow, however real the ſorrow may be, ſees images through miſt, and enlarges them. In theſe caſes, where there is imagination and an ear for harmony that prediſpoſe one to it, ſolitude and ſadneſs very naturally lead the mind "to feed on thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers." This amuſement may tend to ſoothe and to refine the mind, but

whether one is the happier for refinement, is a doubtful caſe; though I were wiſe enough, I am too drowſy for deciſion. The account of my journey muſt alſo be deferred till to-morrow, when, I truſt, my head will be clearer, and my heart lighter. I will tell you of the diabolical quotation which occurred to me on entering the chamber which is to be mine.

"Receive thy new poſſeſſor, one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by time or place."

I left my narrative yeſterday to mount the clouds and chaſe phantoms. I am now very ſick, and very ſober, and reſolved to be methodical. If I grow worſe, our correſpondence will terminate in the only way it ever ſhall; if not, I muſt attend my wonted duties, and lay down my pen. But this day is mine, and ſhall, therefore, be your's. Know, then, beloved, that the Glenmore, or Great Valley, is an opening from ſea to ſea, acroſs Scotland, through ſome of the wildeſt parts of the Highlands. On the eaſt, the ſpacious frith of Cromarty, at the head of which lies Inverneſs, runs up between

between Roſs-ſhire and Murray, a great way inward, till it reaches the Highlands; then on the weſt, you ſail in beween Appin, Leſmore, and Mull, till you come to Loch Linnhe, an inlet of the ſea, on which Fort William ſtands. A little further, as you go towards Fort Auguſtus, you meet with the Lochy, a river which, coming in a weſtward courſe from Loch Lochy, diſcharges itſelf into Lochinnhe, at the old caſte of Inverlochy, properly ſignifying the diſcharge of the Lochy. Over brown and unvaried moors, we travelled, ſtill in ſight of this ſhort river, till we arrived at its parent lake, long, narrow, and remarkable for nothing, but its occupying ſome miles of the Glenmore, and, having had the laſt battle between adverſe clans fought on its banks, which are a dull flat. What gives it intereſt is, that, when you arrive at the end of it, you ſee and feel yourſef in the centre betwixt the two ſeas, and ſee at once the Lochy and the Oich on each ſide of you, running in oppoſite directions, one making its way through Loch Linnhe to the weſt ſea,

and the other through Loch Neſs into the Murray Firth, on the eaſt. It is thoſe faſt-following lakes, linked by filial ſtreams, that form the opening which the three forts were meant to guard, and which, they ſay, invites art to the aid of nature in forming a canal, that ſhould in a manner, divide Scotland; but that will be the buſineſs of a wiſer and a richer century*. I ſhould have told you, in the right place, of my paſſing Highbridge, eight or nine miles, I think, from Fort William. It croſſes the Spean, a ſmall river, which ruſhing down from the central mountains, has worn a channel of aſtoniſhing depth. Over this, two ſhrubby craggs project. The bridge is thrown acroſs from the one to the other, and the arches, founded in the river, are ninety feet high. You know how little I underſtand, or care for buildings; but fine bridges caſt over deep chaſms, have that kind of grandeur that ſeizes on my Gothic imagination. The effect of this one muſt be forcible, I ſhould think, on every mind. After ſo much

* This prediction is now fulfilling.

dreary

dreary moor, the ſhrubbery and verdure about it refreſh the eye; and the ſimple majeſty of theſe lofty arches forms a fine contraſt to the noble, though irregular piles of rock-work, which they connect. The "boiling" and "wheeling" of the waters below animate the view; and even its dizzy horror pleaſes, after the long pauſe of dreary ſtillneſs you have juſt quitted. Another far-ſeen object gives ſad variety to the proſpect, before you leave the languid ſameneſs towards Loch Lochy; it is Lochiel and the ruins of Achnacarrie, once the manſion of the gentle chieftain of the Camerons*. I call him gentle, becauſe he really was ſo. His diſpoſition was milder, his manners ſofter, and his mind more cultivated than thoſe of his companions in misfortune, to uſe a ſoft word. He was like Brutus among the conſpirators, whom you uſed to admire in the play:

"The

* The eſtate of this reſpectable exile, forfeited in the year 1745, has been by his preſent Majeſty reſtored to his deſcendant, the preſent Lochiel.

'The reſt did what they did in envy of great Cæſar,
He only, in a general honeſt thought," &c. &c.

No man ſacrificed more domeſtic comfort to miſtaken principle. No man had clearer views of the fatal reſult. In vain he endeavoured to diſſuade the adventurer, who landed near his houſe, from carrying on his ill-ſupported project. When he ſaw his doubts were miſconſtrued into fear, he took a tender leave of his family, and plunged into the gulf where he foreſaw deſtruction. Can I poſſibly quit Achnacarrie, without proudly reciting an inſtance of the generous attachment of the tenants to their exiled chief. His eſtate was forfeited, and they paid the uſual rent to the Crown; beſides this, they voluntarily paid a rent to ſupport Lochiel's family abroad. When the demeſne was taken by ſome friends for their behoof, the tenants ſtocked it with cattle of all kinds. This too was a pure benevolence; and to this my grandfather, one of that faithful band, amply contributed.—Mr. Gray is provoked at my ſtupidity, in not being loſt

in

in admiration and aſtoniſhment at the military roads. Highbridge, which makes a part of them, I do admire, but have no clear apprehenſion of their general beauty, or wonderful uſefulneſs. I do not juſt take it for granted, that they are to civilize the country ſo ſpeedily and effectually; the people were very *civil* when they were well treated; they were ſo agile and familiar with their own bye-paths, and ſo accuſtomed to go

> "Over moor, over mire,
> Thro' buſh, and thro' briar,"

that I am not clear they will likewiſe forſake their old ſhort cut, for the pleaſure of going ten miles round on hard gravel. Theſe roads will afford acceſs to ſtrangers, who diſlike and deſpiſe the natives, becauſe they do not underſtand them; and to luxuries they cannot afford to pay for, and would be happier without. Early accuſtomed to ſavage life, I have not the horror at it that wiſer people have. As far as merely regards this world, I am not ſure how much my old Mohawk friends have to gain by being civilized; nor

are my expectations very ſanguine of the felicity which more knowledge of good and evil will produce here. They know the plain, the narrow path, which revelation has traced out to a happy immortality; and what more can they know, that will not be vanity and vexation of ſpirit, to a country which nature meant to be poor. I am ſure ſavages have more uſeful and pleaſing knowledge than people imagine, were it only that of birds and plants.

This, perhaps, is ſaying too much; but I am ſo provoked at ſeeing ſhallow, artificial people, who have no ideas but what they borrow, treating the inventive children of the wild with ſcorn. Thoſe who pace all their lives on in an even-paved road, doing every day juſt what they did yeſterday, are unable to eſtimate the powers of thoſe, who muſt bend their mind every hour to ſome new and unpremeditated exertion.—After we paſſed the centre of the Glenmore, where the waters divide, I was much pleaſed to find woody hills, and green plains, narrow, but beautiful, opening before me. Laggana-

chadrom

chadrom charmed me: it ſeemed ſo rural, ſo peaceful, and ſo ſocial. Thinking what innocent ſylvan beings dwelt in thoſe huts, I contemplated them with ſecret pleaſure; and ſo would you, knowing no more than I did. I am ſure there were forty diſtinct buildings ſpread out on a ſmooth little plain, of the ſofteſt, freſheſt verdure. The broad end of Loch Oich, the prettieſt of all poſſible lakes, forms the baſe of this triangular plain: the ſteep green hill of Letterfinlay, on the ſlope of which the light foliage of the drooping birch waved in the evening gale, formed one ſide, and the variegated ſlopes and broken copſes on the Glengarry ſide, the other. Mr. Gray had returned. We had a boy, very ſmart and intelligent, who took care of our horſes. Loſt in contemplation, we were enjoying this paſtoral ſcenery, when we were interrupted with "Ladies, the greateſt thieves in all the country live in theſe houſes." We were ſhocked, but found, upon inquiry, that this ſweet hamlet was really inhabited by the only remaining horde of thoſe plunderers,

who

who uſed to conſider making a *spreath* as a gallant exploit; now, a ſpreath was carrying away forcibly a herd of cattle, and fighting their way through all oppoſition. I felt a kind of horror on finding that the cluſter of innocent peaſants' cottages I had been admiring was merely a den of thieves. I now began to hold the military road, and civilizing the natives, in all due reverence. Nay, ſuch a complete convert was I become, that I felt inclined to admire a happy thought of a worthy good-natured Iriſhman, Governor Caulfield, at Fort George, who moſt poetically exclaimed,

"Had you ſeen theſe roads before they were made,
You would hold up your hands, and bleſs Marſhal Wade."

I wiſh I could ſhare with you the pleaſure I felt, in admiring, in a ſweet ſtill May evening, the ſcenery round *Loch Oich* and Invergarrie; the declining ſun was ſhining, immediately after one of thoſe ſoft warm ſhowers that ſteal ſilently down, refreſhing all nature, and awakening the whole woodland melody. A blackbird, on one ſide of Loch Oich, poured

poured out the fulleſt ſtrain of wild muſic I ever heard; while a wood-lark, from the ſtreaming birch-trees on the other ſide, ſeemed emulous of his notes, and was more ſweetly liquid, though not ſo loud. Do the birds really ſing ſweeter here, or does the wild ſcenery of theſe narrow vales reverberate the ſound, and produce a tone of feeling more accordant to the muſic of nature? I never before felt the magic ſpell of ſweet-according ſounds ſo powerful. O! how I wiſhed for ſome one to ſhare a luxury that wealth cannot purchaſe, and that thouſands are not born to taſte!

"O! blind to truth, to virtue blind,
Who ſlight the ſweetly penſive mind,
On whoſe birth the Graces mild,
And every Muſe prophetic ſmil'd."

"Theſe are the ſpirits born to know and prove,
All nature's charms immenſe, and heaven's unbounded love."

From this trance I was waked by a bright gleam of the parting ſun, which threw its yellow

yellow radiance on the oppoſite windows of Invergarrie houſe. This has all the characteriſtic features of the ſeat of a Highland chieftain — the lake, with little wooded iſlands, that ſeemed to float on the calm ſurface before it; the rapid river ruſhing down from the mountains, pouring its full ſtream into the lake beſide it; the remaining tower of the ancient caſtle frowning proudly on the modern houſe; the long habitable glen opening back from the manſion of the chief, emboſomed in woods and rocks, and animated by cluſters of warm peaceful hamlets. From theſe every peaſant ruſhes to arms, when his maſter's honour or ſafety is endangered: here every man is a hunter, a fiſher, and an architect, in his own way; and there is a muſician in every houſe, and a poet in every hamlet.

Alas! for me, that am "of language ſtrange," and have returned to the land of my forefathers, with only this *Chaldean* Engliſh. "Dark ſayings on the harp" are dark indeed to me.

I greatly

I greatly wiſh you ſaw Glengarry*, it is ſo pictureſque; the glen that aſcends from it, inſtead of narrowing, as uſual, grows broader as it retires back, till you arrive at Loch Garrie, from whence the river of that name deſcends. The caſtle, ſurrounded by a very reſpectable garden of old renown, is half a mile weſt of the houſe. Rich corn fields, a great relief to the eye, after the *brown desert*, fill up the interval; and weſtward from the caſtle, Killeanan, gently ſloping, verdant and diverſified, cloſes the proſpect with due ſolemnity: for there the family burial place, a pretty large incloſure, ſhaded with lofty old trees, arreſts the attention. I think the mind broods with more calm and ſteady attention over the laſt refuge of mortality, when appropriated in this manner to a particular ſet of people, whom the imagination can graſp and follow, than

* Macdonnel of Glengarry is head of a conſiderable branch of that powerful clan, who ſpell their names in that manner to diſtinguiſh them from the Macdonalds of the Iſles, attached to Lord Macdonald.

over

over the reſting places of unknown multitudes, where thought wanders in forlorn confuſion "along the waſte dominions of the dead." You muſt muſe alone, as much as I have done, before you can be capable of penetrating the gloom of a paragraph ſo ſublimely obſcure as my laſt. Tombs, like heroes, have a peculiar attraction for me, I cannot get quietly paſt them.—After having thus tranſgreſſed and digreſſed, I ſhall keep you at Invergarrie, to view the back ground towards the north, where the proſpect riſes into the moſt blue, aërial, and fantaſtic groupe of broken rocks and mountains I ever beheld. Through theſe you can neither ride nor properly walk, but the natives contrive to ſwim and creep, and wade and leap, much in the way Satan did when he viſited the "Anarch old," and then they arrive at another eſtate belonging to Glengarry, on the ſea-ſide, a wondrous region, called Knoidart, where there are no firſt floors at all, but all is garret or cellar; inacceſſible precipices, overhanging mountains, and glens narrow, abrupt, and cut through with deep ravines, combining

ſtanding. Your mind is too good a ſoil to run to waſte. When I think of your native taſte, your delicacy of feeling, and that rectitude of judgment which is your peculiar excellence, I grieve that you know ſo few who comprehend what you poſſeſs, or know what you are capable of acquiring. How pleaſing to ſee the beauties of ſuch a mind expanding! (Will that pleaſure ever again be mine?) Let me ſuppoſe it, in the mean time, a mirror, in which the images that paſs through mine will be reflected. I cannot think how any one who has ever taſted the rich banquet of intellectual pleaſure, mingled with the ſweets of friendſhip, can exiſt deprived of it. Sure the Lotos that Ulyſſes' friends found, was ſomething like it: no wonder they would not come away. If I did not think of you and could not write to you, how forlorn I ſhould be, and how little would "the charm of earlieſt birds," or the wild ſcenes of enchantment, that riſe here and there amidſt the *brown desert*, avail to comfort me. Adieu, my dear. It is time to leave off "*chewing* the food

food of ſweet and bitter fancy." Good night.

LETTER XIV.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, May 25, 1773.

SMALL heart have I to write, and can as yet tell you little of Fort Auguſtus. It was dark before we deſcended to the houſe which is to be ours; of which I can only ſay, that it ſtands in ſomething like a grove, and that this grove riſes on a point at the confluence of the Oich with Loch Neſs. We drank tea with our predeceſſor's family; they are ſtill convaleſcents. - - - - - The clergyman of the place* was the only ſtranger; of whom I was previouſly told that he was handſomer than any body: he appeared more modeſt than moſt handſome men, who are leſs tolerable, I think, than mere

* Rev. James Grant, afterwards Miniſter of Laggan.

handſome

ſtanding. Your mind is too good a ſoil to run to waſte. When I think of your native taſte, your delicacy of feeling, and that rectitude of judgment which is your peculiar excellence, I grieve that you know ſo few who comprehend what you poſſeſs, or know what you are capable of acquiring. How pleaſing to ſee the beauties of ſuch a mind expanding! (Will that pleaſure ever again be mine?) Let me ſuppoſe it, in the mean time, a mirror, in which the images that paſs through mine will be reflected. I cannot think how any one who has ever taſted the rich banquet of intellectual pleaſure, mingled with the ſweets of friendſhip, can exiſt deprived of it. Sure the Lotos that Ulyſſes' friends found, was ſomething like it: no wonder they would not come away. If I did not think of you and could not write to you, how forlorn I ſhould be, and how little would "the charm of earlieſt birds," or the wild ſcenes of enchantment, that riſe here and there amidſt the *brown desert*, avail to comfort me. Adieu, my dear. It is time to leave off "*chewing* the

food

food of ſweet and bitter fancy." Good night.

LETTER XIV.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, May 25, 1773.

SMALL heart have I to write, and can as yet tell you little of Fort Auguſtus. It was dark before we deſcended to the houſe which is to be ours; of which I can only ſay, that it ſtands in ſomething like a grove, and that this grove riſes on a point at the confluence of the Oich with Loch Neſs. We drank tea with our predeceſſor's family; they are ſtill convaleſcents. - - - - - The clergyman of the place* was the only ſtranger; of whom I was previouſly told that he was handſomer than any body: he appeared more modeſt than moſt handſome men, who are leſs tolerable, I think, than mere

* Rev. James Grant, afterwards Miniſter of Laggan.

handſome

handſome women. - - - - - - They cannot remove for ten days, and here am I very much indiſpoſed "in the worſt inn's worſt room;" and to mend the matter, juſt above the beſt bad room, where all ſtrangers are received; and worſe ſtill, this room has a vocal floor, like the one at Luſs. Oh! for a carpet! the only luxury (not intellectual) that I have longed for ſince I left you.—Worſe and worſe—if I do not get better, remember the laſt word I write is my benediction to you.

LETTER XV.

TO COLLECTOR MACVICAR, ON THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE OF HIS DAUGHTER.

Fort Auguſtus, May 25, 1773.

MY DEAR SIR,

I KNOW not how to conſole you, nor indeed how to mention the event that has grieved

grieved us all ſo much; yet, after all, this new connexion is a gentleman by birth and education.

Very great blame there certainly is, but a ſmall part comparatively remains with thoſe who are in a great meaſure ſufferers from their own imprudence. The contrivers and abettors of this raſh union are more deſerving of your anger than the parties themſelves. Marriages thus haſty and clandeſtine have ſometimes proved fortunate beyond all expectation. It was perhaps too great a charge for a creature ſo young and lovely, without a protector of her own ſex, to manage a family, and be obliged to entertain all kinds of company. I know—I am certain, your heart muſt relent towards her, when you conſider fully of it. The regiment I am told is ordered abroad; they may be years without meeting; ſhe will return home penitent and thoughtful, to take charge of your affairs; and, her fate being now fixed, will have no object to draw off her attention.

I am confined here; and reading ſome of the

the books I had from you is my only conſolation! When I am well enough to write more at large, I ſhall endeavour to amuſe you with my crude opinions, for which I ſhall make no apology, as it is in compliance with your own deſire. I am, very ſincerely,

Yours, with much eſteem.

LETTER XVI.

TO COLLECTOR MACVICAR.

Fort Auguſtus, May 28, 1773.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I wrote to you laſt, I have been moſt intent on biography, and quite engroſſed by heroes and legiſlatures. I am afraid and aſhamed, after all my promiſes of frankneſs, to tell you who is my favourite. When I look up to the great legiſlator of the north, like Shenſton's little boys,

"I do in paſſing wonderment abound,
And think *he* been the greateſt wight on ground."

I am aſtoniſhed and borne down with the force of that mighty mind, which burſt all the golden chains of imperial pomp and prejudice,—which came ſtreaming like the aurora borealis, to pour its ſplendors on the regions of darkneſs; and which ſtooped like the fabled Antæus, to gain ſtrength from the earth, and riſe with freſh vigour. Self-abaſement, matchleſs patience, and ſtub-born perſeverance, virtues dealt ſparingly to the hero kind, were his pre-eminently. I ſurvey his new creation with aſtoniſhment; I ſee him preſiding at the birth of intellect with reverence; and yet, I reſpect and admire, without loving or eſteeming this extraordinary character. He was a heartleſs barbarian after all; his views were often juſt and always great, but he did not care whom or what he trampled on, to attain to the completion of them. Only think of him, like another Herod, ſacrificing ſo many hundred innocents to his prepoſterous ſalt-water experiment. It was an inſolent and impious attempt to conquer nature. Then how many thouſands fell victims to his ambition

bition of building that ſhocking town Peterſburg! He might have made the principal ſtreet of *dead men's bones* (as children ſay of London Bridge in the old ballad) provided he applied the remains of the poor peaſants to that purpoſe. *Five hundred thousand* people to be ſacrificed with ſuch cool deliberation, to create a ſea port! I am ſure, though he did conquer nature there, it was a dear-bought victory. Which of Shakeſpear's heroes is it that ſays with ſuch bitter regret,

"If I am forced
To draw this ſword to be a widow-maker,
Bear witneſs heaven, &c. &c."

That was generous open war; fatal and depopulating at beſt, no doubt, yet a field for noble exertions, and for the diſplay of ſome ſhining qualities. But to go calmy and coolly with a hatchet and a trowel to be a widow-maker to ſuch an extent,—I have no patience with the cold-hearted tyrant. If you *will* know what I think of him, you muſt not call it prudery when I expreſs inſuperable diſguſt at his marriage, and at the

blind admiration which that circumſtance of his life has excited. To divorce his wife without a pretext, to give the example to a great empire, which he profeſſed to enlighten and reform,—of a father's bringing, not merely his own miſtreſs, but the miſtreſs of other men, to rule over his family, to be the mother-in-law of his ſon, the heir of that vaſt empire! What father could place confidence in his ſon, or give him leſſons of virtue, when conſcious that he had forfeited all claim to his reverence? What huſband, what father can find felicity excluſive of his family? What laurels, what eulogies can extract the ſting of domeſtic miſery? The wretched, withered heart, pines unrefreſhed, like Gideon's fleece, that lay dry, while all nature ſhared the genial influence of the dews of heaven. On the evil conſequences reſulting to ſociety, from breaking down the partition wall which ſeparates the undeviating from contagion, volumes might be written, replete with inſtruction, corroborated by facts. But a ſingle fact ſelected from the life of this mighty legiſlator, contains the eſſence of volumes;

volumes; it is that of beheading a gentleman of his bed-chamber, a handſome favourite of the empreſs, on the mere ſurmiſe that this favour extended beyond due limits. You will recollect too that the Czar had his head expoſed on a pole in the pathway, and he drove out his happy empreſs in a ſledge paſt the *pole*. She did not aſk what head it was, nor did he make the leaſt alluſion to it. What eaſy intercourſe, what perfect confidence! Now there could be only two ways of viewing this circumſtance; Catherine was guilty, or ſhe was not. If ſhe was guilty, how peculiarly aggravated was that guilt; how depraved was that mind; how vicious thoſe habits; how hardened that ingratitude; which, in ſpite of the light of her own excellent underſtanding; in ſpite of the dangers and ſpies that ſurrounded her, could add a deeper blot to all former ſtains, and could look with cool diſſimulation on the dreadful reſult of her crime! Now, had Peter, as he ought to have done, if convinced of her guilt, hurled her down to contempt and infamy, the world

would have approv'd the juſtice of his vengeance, and her memory would periſh with the opprobrium of that very world, which now applauds her becauſe ſhe was prudent and fortunate. Add the reflection, of what life a man of a great mind and ſtrong paſſions muſt afterwards lead, with a perſon whoſe infidelity and ingratitude he was convinced of; how the mere ſhame of having debaſed himſelf by ſuch an alliance, muſt have made him ſwallow his injuries. Conſider too, how totally that delicacy, which inhabits every pure and noble mind, muſt be extinguiſhed, before a man could live on with a perſon whom he inwardly deſpiſed. Say, then, that in a raſh fit of jealouſy, he, a legiſlator, a ſelf-conqueror, neither young nor romantic, had taken the life of a man whom he afterwards found reaſon to believe innocent? Can there be a ſtronger teſtimony of the diſquiet, diſtruſt, and reſtleſs perturbation, which muſt reſult from ſuch an alliance? Othello talks of

"The minutes he tells o'er
Who doats, yet doubts, ſuſpects, yet ſtrongly loves."

What

What then muſt be his fate, who begins his married life by laying a broad and juſt foundation for jealouſy? What woman who hopes for protection, would marry a known coward? Is life, or any thing pertaining to it, ſo dear as that honour, that very exiſtence of his family, which a man intruſts to his wife? Though ſurrounded with glory, and admired by all the world, is it to be wondered at, that the Great Peter ſo often drowned in wine the bitterneſs of reflection? Had he built fewer ſhips and towns, and begun his great work with reforming the morals of his ſubjects by his own example, his work might have been ſlower, perhaps, but it would have been ſurer. Elegance and refinement are eaſily added to wiſdom and virtue, they are indeed produced by them; when a man is brought to think rightly and act juſtly, his taſte improves apace; and we ſee all over the world, where virtue languiſhes, the arts decay. I muſt return to juſtify my limited admiration of your favourite hero, who I ſuſpect ſtands the higher with you for being an artiſt, like

your own duke Archibald. How a man ſhould be great without generoſity, ſeems wonderful; and yet great he was, and generous he was not: no, not in a ſingle recorded inſtance. His promoting foreigners, who would not ſtay among his bears without promotion, I ſhould only call ſound policy. I ſhall not detail what every page evinces; I will not grate my feelings with the recollection of the accumulated cruelty and injuſtice which ſent the brave Swedes, priſoners of war, gentlemen, and ſervants of a generous and heroic maſter, to expiate the crime of obedience in the deſerts of Siberia; which ſent generals, who had ſtruck terror into the heart of Moſcow, and dazzled all Europe with the ſplendor of their actions, to build huts in Siberia with their own hands and teach his half rational ſlaves to plant turnips on the banks of the Oby. To ſum up all, I conſider Peter as a man wiſe and brave without virtue. Perhaps his hard unbending character was as well calculated to make political reforms in Ruſſia, as the ſanguine and ferocious temper of John Knox,

for

for making religious ones in Scotland.—I will not apologize. You bid me read biography, to teach me to think; I have thought and here is the reſult. If I have not made you very angry, I will next give my thoughts of this rival hero. Will you, dear Sir, continue to think that I reſpect your opinions, reverence your judgment, and ſhall always be your obliged friend and obedient ſervant.

LETTER XVII.

TO COLLECTOR MACVICAR.

Fort Auguſtus, May 30, 1773.

I REJOICE, dear Sir, that you are pleaſed with my ſincerity, and not *displeased* with my enthuſiaſm. I hope it will not, as you ſeem to think, evaporate with time. I truſt I ſhall be an enthuſiaſt in friendſhip, and in the love of virtue and of nature, all the days of my life. How could ſpirits, aſpiring

after ſomething better than this world affords, exiſt in this gloomy uncongenial clime without it? When torpor threatens to chill the ſoul, enthuſiaſm warms and animates it; when the mind tends to be languid and enervated, it invigorates and braces it. 'Tis the fan of a warm climate, and the fur of a cold one. Whoever did much good to others, without a degree of enthuſiaſm, to looſen the faculties from their coheſion with ſelf-love? I will no longer bewilder myſelf among figures, for I ſee you ready to compare me to Hudibras,

"Who could not ope
His mouth but out there flew a trope."

Yet is not enthuſiaſm pardonable, when about to enter on the diſcuſſion of a life of wonders, where all is true yet nothing probable? Even the right marvellous life of Charles the Twelfth?—The unfortunate have few friends. This remark is neither ſo trite nor ſo invidious in my application of it as it may at firſt appear; we are not always malignant, but we are very often lazy; peoples misfortunes are ſo often owing to their own miſconduct,

miſconduct, that, without examining into particulars, we are ready to take it for granted in moſt caſes, and become unjuſt, to ſave ourſelves the trouble of candid inveſtigation. Never was there a human being whoſe character was more modelled by peculiarities in his ſituation and education; by irreſiſtible impulſes from without and from within, all driving him on to that ardent extreme, to which his natural temper too forcibly inclined. Reared under a father cold and ſtern; defectively educated; taught from childhood to value nothing but military glory; left ſo very young to act for himſelf, and ſurrounded by people little ſkilled in the elegant arts, who had not learned to eſtimate truly the ſofter graces and milder virtues of civilized life—Young, inexperienced, yet full of valour, generoſity, and integrity, a ſtorm broke around him, which involved all his future life in tempeſts. The perfidious confederacy of the three royal robbers, who, under the maſk of friendſhip, had agreed to take advantage of the minority of a brother ſovereign, to deſpoil him of his

crown, and divide his territories, while it called forth the military talents of the young prince, to prompt and aſtoniſhing exertion, gave, at the ſame time, an inflexible bias to his mind. The more upright and pure he felt his own ſentiments, the more indignation this conduct muſt have excited. There is no motive that could ſtimulate the human mind to perſevering hoſtility, but what mingled in this caſe; revenge, which the provocation had almoſt exalted into virtue; the patriot paſſion burning for his injured country; emulation, excited by rivals, brave, powerful, and invidious; the ardour of youthful enthuſiaſm animating

"A frame of iron, and a ſoul of fire;"

and, finally, the

"Fatal love of fame, that glorious heat,
Only deſtructive to the brave and great."

Stern, obſtinate, and uncultured, highly exaſperated and ſignally victorious; what was the conduct of this prince, when the proud city of Copenhagen lay at the feet of a victor, ſcarce ſeventeen? Piety, moderation, clemency,

mency, and magnanimity, marked every ſtep of his progreſs. Had he not outlived that year, it would have been very unjuſt to characterize him as a mere warrior. Even then he was ſomething more, and ſomething better. After granting terms dictated by lenity and probity to this faithleſs enemy, let us view his conduct to the more faithleſs Czar, after the victory at Narva; that victory whoſe rapidity diſtanced belief, while its ſplendor dazzled imagination. Still we find him acting with the generoſity of a true hero, and the courteſy of a preux chevalier, without fear or reproach; aſcribing all glory to the God of battles, and treating the vanquiſhed with unequalled humanity. Could it be expected, that in the midſt of this brilliant and rapid career, he ſhould readily liſten to terms of accommodation, dictated by thoſe very fears that inſured his future victories; from an enemy too, who had planned the deſtruction of his country?—Would the great Guſtavus, wiſe and pious as he was, have done it in the ſame circumſtances? Beſides, he was actuated by the

ſpirit

ſpirit of chivalry, and conſidered his courage as the gift of Providence, beſtowed upon him to redreſs the injured and protect the weak. How different would be the judgment of the world, regarding his conduct in Poland, had ſucceſs attended him to the end of his career! Was not Auguſtus a perjured prince, without honour or morality; who governed by intrigue, broke every compact, and violated every duty, both to his Saxon and Poliſh ſubjects? What did Charles do, but remove him from a throne which he had degraded to venality, and ſtained by his vices? He ſent him back to Saxony, which he ſhould never have left. Finding that the Poles, corrupted by the example of a king, at whoſe depoſition they rejoiced, had neither virtue nor concord remaining, ſufficient for the purpoſes of a free election, he pointed out to them a young man, noble, brave, virtuous, and candid, to whom he ſeemed attracted by congenial rectitude of mind, and who repreſented one of their moſt illuſtrious families. Why does not the ſcene cloſe here? Why not ſtop, while

while we have the pleaſure of contemplating this extraordinary man, with hands unſtained by cruelty and injuſtice, and a heart pure from every ſiniſter motive, "acknowledged lord of pleaſure and of pain," neither to be attracted by the one, nor repelled by the other; diſpenſing crowns and dignities with the moſt diſintereſted liberality; receiving the homage of the north and the ſplendid embaſſies of the eaſt, with unvarying modeſty; and uniting in his habits of life the activity and ardour of a ſoldier, with the ſimplicity and abſtemiouſneſs of an anchorite! He indeed was a hero to his valet de chambre, for he had nothing to conceal, nothing to be aſhamed of. But who could drink ſo deep of the cup of proſperity, without being in ſome degree intoxicated? Who can paſs through life without committing ſome fault, the conſequences of which cloud and embitter it? His treatment of Patkul was indeed very barbarous; I never think of it without horror, and feel little inclined to be the advocate of cruelty: but, from the undeviating rectitude of

of his general conduct, this being the ſole inſtance in which he was charged with injuſtice, it is but candid to ſuppoſe, he conſidered himſelf as inflicting death on a traitor. The manner of it is not to be palliated; it is a great but a ſingle ſtain. His ſubſequent ſchemes of ambition were doubtleſs extravagant and injudicious; and the raſhneſs of endeavouring to combat the elements and ſubdue nature, in his march to Pultowa, was ſtill more ſo. Yet he led his men to no hardſhips that he did not ſhare with them; he was certainly deceived by flatterers, who attacked him on his only vulnerable ſide, by perſuading him he could overcome difficulties, from their nature inſurmountable. Can you withhold your pity and your admiration from him in that ſad criſis of his fate, when the ſun of his proſperity ſet, to riſe no more; or when he bore the utmoſt bodily pain, and the moſt wringing anguiſh that a great mind can ſuffer, without a change in his countenance or temper? Can any thing equal his fortitude and patience in Turkey, or his wild heroiſm

at

at Bender, where his liberality and ſimple manners, his unſtained morals and undaunted mind, won reverence and affection from the very Janizaries; or his unſhaken perſeverance in Demetica, where he lay eleven months in bed, in perfect health, to eſcape the riſk of degradation, to him the greateſt of evils? I own his reign was a misfortune to his people: I confeſs it was happy for him and them that it terminated ſo ſoon; when exaſperation, injuries, and diſappointments, had driven him to a kind of obſtinate deſperation. Yet ſtill I admire and regret him, and look upon him as a man brave and virtuous, without wiſdom; whoſe great qualities may be ſafely admired, without the leaſt danger of their being imitated. He is unique, and will continue ſo. You wonder at my preference, but I cannot give much of my admiration without ſome of my eſteem. Again, this ſelf-ſubdued hero ſerves to eſtabliſh my favourite maxim: without ſelf-denial and ſelf-conqueſt, I have no idea of any conſiſtent virtue. Who can depend for a moment, on a character open

to

to all the attacks of paſſion, all the allurements of pleaſure? A caſe like his, where ſo many cauſes concurred to urge him on to purſuits ſo fatal and pernicious, can occur but very ſeldom. But what ſoldier, emulous of his well-won fame, would not benefit by imitating his temperance, his probity, his contempt of pleaſure, and his abhorrence of meanneſs? Peace to his ſhade! which has doubtleſs, ere now, claimed kindred with a far more amiable hero; but his only equal in unwearied perſeverance, romantic and extravagant courage, unconquerable ſtrength of mind and body, and unblemiſhed purity of morals. You have found out, ere now, that I mean our own unequalled Wallace. They both early began the race of glory; both ſtemmed the torrent of adverſity with unſhaken fortitude; both refuſed honours and dignities with ſteady magnanimity; and both, at a very early period, fell victims to misfortune. Our hero had a manifeſt ſuperiority in the uprightneſs of his motives. Unbiaſſed by ambition or vanity, he lived and died a generous patriot. Conqueror to

the

the laſt, he ſubdued the rigour of his fate by the calm cheerfulneſs with which he met it. The noble ſentiments he diſplayed in the laſt ſcene of ſuffering, overcame the reſentment of a hoſtile nation, ſo that

" His fair fame, with clear and radiant blaze,
Spreads and grows brighter with the lapſe of days."

So far the Scot has the advantage of the Swede; a proof that the world is not always unjuſt. I have been tedious on this favourite theme. I wiſh to hear your criticiſm. Though I am ſanguine, like Wallace, I am not obſtinate like Charles, and ſhall yield up my errors to your correction, with all due ſubmiſſion. I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XVIII.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, June 5, 1773.

My dear, I have been ſo ſick and ſo ſtudious, and ſo willing to pleaſe and amuſe the

the Collector, under his late ſevere affliction, that I have given you, and our truſty and well beloved Bell, room to ſuppoſe I have already forgot you. My right hand was at one time very near forgetting her cunning; but my heart, like poor Maria's, is ſtill warm, and while it beats I ſhall tenderly remember you both. Your letter is, like yourſelf, all truth, nature, and candour. Don't be diſcouraged; there lies no fair compariſon between us. Forced to read and think from childhood, for want of brother, ſiſter, or companion of my own age; toſs'd from place to place, and early accuſtomed to the ſociety of my ſuperiors in age and knowledge; what ſhould my mind do but unfold? You had every diſadvantage; I ſhall never be other than I am, but you will every day improve.—I had no pleaſure in writing to you of that marriage which I knew you would hear of but too ſoon. I certainly ſhould make a very bad Duenna. She is a ſtrange creature, and could not be improved. Her pride was in high company, but her pleaſure in low; for her equals ſhe never

never cared, and reading I never could get her to reliſh. How very vigilant my good angel was the day before I left Oban, when I took that ſtrange ſudden deſire to come away, which has been ſo much for my peace and credit! The very night I left them, this marriage took place; it was celebrated in the garden during an ominous ſhower of ſnow, with no other witneſſes than that happy pair who had acted the ſame part themſelves ſo lately. Unhappy creature, what a fond parent has ſhe plunged into grief and diſappointment! He had great hopes of her; her beauty and plauſibility warranted them. - - - - - Love to our Bell. I can tell you nothing of the place. My cough has been drowned in decoctions of mountain herbs, given me by the beſt woman in the world, who keeps this houſe; I ſhould have died but for her. I have not gone down ſtairs yet, and am at a loſs with this *pervious* floor, whether to wiſh myſelf deaf, or all the gueſts dumb. If uncle Francis, with his irritable nerves were here, it would either kill or cure him. Do you know I have not been

been in Eumaus's pig-houſe this month, which you uſed to ſay was my favourite haunt.—The poor dear Odyſſey is quite neglected; I have forſaken it for biography; I can ſpeak of nobody leſs than a king or a general, and ſhall take the firſt opportunity of introducing you to prince Mazeppa. Tweed and Clyde are not worth a farthing now, I can think of nothing but Dneiper and the Boriſthenes. I have ſome toleration too for the Wolga. "O voman, voman!" as Win. Jenkins ſays, "If you knew but the pleſhur we ſcullers have when we cenſter the crabbit werds." You ſee ſpirits will return with health, but you muſt expect no more bulky letters from your unchangeable, &c.

LETTER XIX.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, June 15, 1773.

I WILL deſcribe this place to you, if I can. It is a miniature of New York as to ſituation, and upon that you have often heard me deſcant; only this is on a very ſmall ſcale. The village, and remains of the old fort, ſtand on a little riſing ground above the Oich, a ſweet wild-murmuring ſtream, that comes down on the north ſide from Loch Oich and Glengarry: on the ſouth ſide, the Tarffe ſteals through deep-wooded glens from the Corryarick, and wanders, at length, through a meadowy low valley, bounded by very ſteep woody braes, on the garriſon ſide, and a mountain, gentle in its aſcent, verdant and cultivated half-way up, on the other, ſurrounded by rugged rocks, that ſeem to frown ſullenly on the ſweet ſcenes below.

The fort ſtands on the brink of the lake, near the centre, and the Oich and Tarffe diſcharge their pure ſtreams into it on each ſide. Next the lake, the Governor has created a moſt pictureſque ſhrubbery and garden in the dry ditch that ſurrounds the fort, and has covered the wall with fruit-trees, and hid the maſked battery with laurels. That beautiful ſpot the glacis, is almoſt an iſland: the village looks down on it from the weſt; on the north and ſouth it is incloſed by the Tarffe and Oich, a bridge croſſing each, parallel with the fort; on the eaſt, Loch Neſs forms a noble boundary, with its pier, and ſolitary veſſel, which the vaſtneſs of the ſurrounding objects diminiſhes to a toy. The fort too appears the prettieſt little thing you can imagine. You would ſuppoſe ſome old veteran had built himſelf a houſe with a ditch and drawbridge, to remind him of his paſt exploits. I have not been in it yet, but the barracks form the walls, and they are ſo white and clean-looking, and the baſtions ſo green and rural, and it is ſo fancifully planted round with the moun-

mountain-aſh, you would think Vertumnus commanded here, and had garriſoned the fort with Dryads. The lake, which opens in a long viſta below, reflects this fairy fortreſs; and a ſtill more rural ſcene, a little to the north, on a long fantaſtic-looking point, at the junction of the Oich with the lake, ſtands my father's houſe, ſurrounded with tall aſh-trees and gardens. Very near it is that of the commander of this ſolitary veſſel. The ſerene grandeur of this lake in a calm is not to be deſcribed. Bold, ſteep mountains riſe on the ſouth ſide; little retiring bays and ſloping woods give variety to the north: and the reflection is ſo fine; nothing interupts it for twenty-four miles, at the end of which, the lake diſcharges, through the ſhort rapid river Neſs, into the Murray Firth. The immediate ſcene, in ſhort, is tranquil and beautiful, while the ſurrounding objects are all rude and majeſtic. About half a mile up the ſmiling meads that border the Tarffe, is the village burying-ground, a place of old renown, where many a ſoldier ſleeps to wake no

more. As I ſtood at the door in the afternoon, contemplating the ſcene I have tried to deſcribe, a cannon, fired by the fort, and anſwered by the veſſel, announced an approaching funeral. There was a ſoft ſhower, or rather heavy miſt, which made every thing look freſh, but ſad. Wreaths of thin clouds came down on the mountains, as if they too wore the veil of ſorrow. The proceſſion came out with muffled drums, and fifes playing a dead march. A fine youth, intimate with the deceaſed, and much about his age, walked as chief mourner, and ſeemed greatly affected: ſo was every creature. You can't think how touching it was to ſee a funeral, where every invidual ſeemed ſunk in the deepeſt ſorrow. The mournful muſic, echoed by the rocks, followed the winding of the Tarffe till they reached the grave. I was chilled when the ſolemn pauſe enſued; and, when the diſcharge of muſkets announced the cloſe of the ceremony, I felt as if I were ſuddenly left alone,—ſuch is the effect of ſcenery and muſic. Not that entirely,

tirely, either; but, from having heard, beſides, every one in the place agitated by hopes and fears about the deceaſed ever ſince we came here. He was the only ſon of a perſon in ſome employment about the royal houſehold. A ſtrong paſſion for a military life induced him to enter the regiment, quartered here laſt winter, as enſign. The ſuperior officer, to whoſe charge he was entruſted, leaving the place the day before we came, his *protegé* went to ſee him over Corryarick. The captain, on parting with his young friend, diſcharged his muſket, forgetting it had ſmall ſhot in it: the young man's knee was ſhattered; he was carried back, and the amputation found neceſſary ſeemed, at firſt, ſucceſsful. Sunday night, however, when all was thought ſecure, the bandages looſened, and he bled to death. He was ſo much beloved, and pitied, that the operation and progreſs of the cure was every one's theme. I heard nothing through my vocal floor, but how Taafe was*, and

* Enſign Taafe of the 43d, whoſe father was Upholſterer to his Majeſty.

what Taafe ſaid, and eulogiums, and regrets. Nobody is ſo lamented in town, becauſe there people do not think long on any one thing.—Adieu. Night will ſeem long and diſmal, but I can write no more.

LETTER XX.

TO COLLECTOR MACVICAR, OBAN.

Fort Auguſtus, June 20, 1773.

I AM ſure, my dear Sir, you will incline to think me as mad as my hero, though you do not exactly ſay ſo. I ſuſpect he was no favourite with Duke Archibald; whoſe opinions I ſuppoſe you reſpected many years ago, as I do your's now. I think, when you and he joined counſels about removing poor old Inverary, it was a very *Czarish* plan; and I fear it will ſoon be put in execution. If I had great anceſtors, my domains would have a very groteſque appearance; for ſo much would my reverence for

for antiquity combat my love of elegance, that I would not willingly remove a ſtone from the buildings they had reared.

I expect a kind and favourable anſwer to the interceſſions in my laſt I touch, with a trembling hand, on a ſubject ſo delicate; and would not touch it at all, if I were not pretty confident of aſſiſtance from an advocate in your own breaſt. In the mean time I will hope the beſt, and endeavour to purſue Oliver Cromwell, through all his crooked paths. I have gone but a ſhort way, my attention having been completely engroſſed by a book that has bewitched me for the time; 'tis the Vicar of Wakefield, which you muſt certainly read. Goldſmith puts one in mind of Shakeſpear; his narrative is improbable and abſurd in many inſtances, yet all his characters do and ſay ſo exactly what might be ſuppoſed of them, if ſo circumſtanced, that you willingly reſign your mind to the ſway of this pleaſing enchanter; laugh heartily at improbable incidents, and weep bitterly for impoſſible diſtreſſes. But his perſonages have all ſo much

nature about them! Keep your gravity if you can, when Moſes is going to market with the colt, in his waiſtcoat of goſling-green; when the Vicar's family make the notable proceſſion on Blackberry and his companion; or, when the fine ladies dazzle the Flamboroughs with taſte, Shakeſpear, and the muſical glaſſes; not to mention the polemical triumphs of that redoubted monogamiſt the Vicar. 'Tis a thouſand pities Goldſmith had not patience, or art, to conclude ſuitably a ſtory ſo happily conducted; but the cloſing events ruſh on ſo precipitately, are managed with ſo little ſkill, and wound up in ſuch a hurried and really bungling manner, that you ſeem haſtily awaked from an affecting dream. Then miſeries are heaped on the poor Vicar with ſuch barbarous profuſion, that the imagination, weary of ſuch cruel tyranny, ends it by breaking the illuſion. I have too much indeed, anticipated your own obſervations; but my intention was to awake your curioſity, that you might ſhare the pleaſure this artleſs tale has afforded me.—

To

To quit the flowery paths of ingenious fiction for the thorny maze in which I am ſlowly advancing, is no pleaſing tranſition to female fancy. I make it the more reluctantly, as I have not yet duly conſidered the character I am purſuing. While he mounts the dizzy crags of ambition, by ways untried before, which he does not ſeem to have premeditated, I gaze with wonder, heightened by perplexity; trying, but vainly trying, to diſcover at what exact time he ceaſed to have at heart the public good, and that which he thought to be the intereſts of religion.

You ſee I take it for granted, he was ſincere at firſt; and am the more convinced of this, as nothing could be more natural than the firſt ſteps of his progreſs. His early tranſition from a libertine to an enthuſiaſt, is by no means wonderful. If a raſh, impetuous libertine becomes at all devout, that ſame headlong fervour that hurried him down the precipice of vice, will animate him on his return to virtue. He will feel a more eager aſpiration after ſu-

perior attainments in ſpiritual improvement, than thoſe who have not been miſled, and a revolting horror at the allurements of vice, and all the deluſions from whoſe power he has eſcaped. Hurrying as faſt as poſſible to the oppoſite extreme, his ſpeed will naturally kindle enthuſiaſm. This appears to have been preciſely Cromwell's caſe at his outſet.

The rigour of Laud ſoured him into a bigot. The vehement and declamatory ſtyle of preaching, which prevailed among his ſect, heated him into a fanatic. When temporal views, mingling with ſpiritual, awaked the ſpark of ambition which lay hid under the ſpecious pretence of zeal for reformation, hypocriſy began to take its turn to reign. It would be tedious and difficult to trace his progreſs; yet, marking theſe changes and gradations in his caſe, and that of others, would be no uſeleſs taſk. It would help us to a ſolution of many hiſtorical doubts, which, probably, became ſuch by an impatience in writers to decide on the motives

motives of actions, without developing the proceſs of opinion; to cut, in ſhort, the knot they would not take time to untie. It is certainly invidious, as well as injudicious, to brand all thoſe with the ſtigma of hypocriſy, who were, by the oppoſition and claſhing of parties, the ſtream of popular prejudices, and the tumult of popular commotions, hurried far beyond their intentions, and involved in a maſs, from which there was no poſſible means of ſeparating.

When we find him, who was not unjuſtly ſtigmatized as the arch-hypocrite of his day, ſincerely pious at one period; we muſt learn that (when it is ſo neceſſary at different ſtages of life, and under different circumſtances, to diſtinguiſh the ſame man from his former ſelf) it becomes ſtill more neceſſary, for the purpoſe of tracing back the cauſes and weighing the conſequences of actions, that we ſhould attend to the diſtinction of character among thoſe who, though very different in their views, are by ſlight obſervers, conſidered as one claſs. For inſtance, thoſe who, having little piety

themſelves, are not aware of its different effects on the minds of others, are very apt to confound all enthuſiaſts with bigots. Now an enthuſiaſt ſees the bright ſide of all objects. Except in one of thoſe occaſional fits of deſpondency, which are the common portion of morbid ſenſibility, his ardent mind gives a bright colouring to all things connected with the object of his deſires and contemplations. He is highly benevolent, becauſe the common ſtate of depravity, and the common refuge of hope in an only Redeemer, from a ſtrong tie betwixt him and thoſe who have already, or may hereafter, become penitent like him:

"Theſe ſhare the joy that faith and hope ſupply."

Enthuſiaſm in devotion is thus perfectly compatible with cheerfulneſs of temper, and with the utmoſt liberality and good-will to all who worſhip the ſame God, more particularly thoſe who hold their ſalvation by the ſame charter. We may perceive, by a little obſervation of characters which we are well acquainted with, that bigotry, ſo often

often confounded with enthuſiaſm, is very unlike, indeed often oppoſite to it: it is a ſpecies of ſelf-deception in thoſe who ſubſtitute a ſtrong attachment to certain peculiar opinions, with regard to the ordinances of the Divinity, for a love of his eſſence; and they miſtake a certain vanity in exerciſing their faculties upon polemical ſubjects, for a delight in contemplating the divine perfections. A bigot may be (indeed often is) as ſincere as an enthuſiaſt; but his views do not tend to meliorate his temper, or enlarge his heart; they have rather the direct contrary effect. The tranſition from a bigot to a hypocrite is not neceſſary nor common, in ordinary circumſtances. Yet a perſon who idolizes his opinions cannot abound in charity; and he who does not love God well enough to love even his defaced and degraded image for his ſake, is certainly in greater danger of being miſled by ſelf-intereſt, into a dereliction of his principles, than thoſe whoſe hearts are warmed and expanded by their devotion. He may inſenſibly be led to cheriſh a degree of ſpiritual

pride, teaching him to impoſe on others, (and even on himſelf, if that were poſſible) auſterity of manners and outward obſervances, for that religion "which is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated." In many inſtances, it would be the greateſt preſumption in any human being to ſay where bigotry ended, and hypocriſy began.

You may obſerve inſtances of Cromwell's leaders, eſpecially thoſe who commanded in Ireland, and executed what they called divine vengeance againſt the catholic garriſons, perpetrating ſuch deeds of cruelty as human nature ſhudders at. Yet, ſo thoroughly ſatisfied were theſe men, that they were acting according to conſcience, that they not only lived a ſelf-denied and pious life ever after, but cloſed the ſcene on the ſcaffold, (upon the change of government) with ſerenity; profeſſing their dependence on the Divine mercy, full of concern for "having fallen ſhort of the glory of God," as they expreſſed it, and "being unprofitable ſervants;" yet not feeling the leaſt apparent

parent compunction for cruelties acted and ordered by them.

All this is not mere digreſſion, though it may ſeem ſo; for if one did not read the hiſtory of that age of wonders with ſome attention to the ſhades and degrees of guilt, that were forced upon ſome by the ruſhing cataract of furious party zeal in their aſſociates, and which others ſlid into when once they departed in a ſlight degree from the unvarying path of rectitude, to do evil that good might come of it; if one did not attend to the gradations by which certain characters ſunk in value and efficacy, and thus gave room to unprincipled individuals of the ſame party to take the lead; one ſhould ſhrink back with horror from human nature itſelf, wearing ſuch a deformed and diſaſtrous aſpect. The oppoſite parties, too, were too much exaſperated to ſpeak with truth and candour of each other. Yet even thoſe barbarous factions, while they broke down reſtraints, ſo as to ſhew the human heart in its utmoſt deformity and depravity, produced many virtues, elicited much bra-

very,

very, fidelity, and true patriotiſm, that would otherwiſe never have been roufed into action. All this is not Cromwell. I have tired your patience, and my own, with this long letter; I ſhall therefore defer my opinion of him to another, which you muſt encourage me to write to you. I muſt only ſay at preſent, that I am not over dazzled by his abilities: his was a life of contingencies, made or patched up out of the fragments of other peoples's broken ſyſtems; he lay on the watch for caſual advantages, ſnatched them from friends and foes, and purſued them to the utmoſt. This, a man of plan or ſyſtem could not have done. When he had converted his warmeſt friends into his bittereſt enemies, his only hope of impunity was by climbing up out of their reach. In his elevation he found his only ſafety; but the wretchedneſs of that elevation, the miſery of ruling by cruel and inceſſant expedients, and living in perpetual dread, and dying at laſt of ceaſeleſs and ſecret perturbations, afford a ſtill ſtronger leſſon againſt

" Vaulting

" Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itſelf,"

than even that awful one which hiſtory and poetry have blended their powers to impreſs in the inſtructive ſcenes of Macbeth. I have, as uſual, wandered, but my hope and intention, dear Sir, is to amuſe you; and that, perhaps, I may do as much by the ſtarts and excurſions of an unformed mind, as by methodically and conſequentially detailing opinions not worthy your attention. I hope this will find your domeſtic peace eſtabliſhed, and your mind reconciled to thoſe evils which wiſdom cannot prevent; through virtue, and, above all, that rareſt virtue, patience, may convert them into bleſſings. Not a word more about Cromwell, till you tell me how I acquit myſelf in the untried region of criticiſm.

I am always,
with great eſteem and deference,
Your obedient ſervant.

LETTER XXI.

TO COLLECTOR MACVICAR.

Fort Auguſtus, June 30, 1773.

I REALLY cannot determine whether you, my dear Sir, are amuſing yourſelf with harmleſs raillery at the expence of your too preſumptuous correſpondent, or, whether you mix ſerious opinions with a little grave irony. As I feel myſelf very unequal to meet you upon the ground of raillery, I ſhall willingly take it for granted, that you are "quite ſerious," and as ſeriouſly comply with your requiſition. In ſhort, I will endeavour to point out the ſources whence this "premature information and reflection has been derived." Spirit of Biograpy! (Muſe of Biography! methinks I ſhould rather ſay) on what calm elevation doſt thou reſide, ſurrounded by the powers of juſt diſcrimination, candid diſcuſſion, and true delineation?—Could I trace thy abode

abode far, far beyond the clouds of paſſion, and miſts of prejudice, I would invoke thy aſſiſtance to pourtray a faint ſketch of the uſeful and happy life, the eſtimable and ſingular character of the friend of my childhood, the inſtructreſs of my youth, and the exiſting model, in my mind, of the higheſt practical virtue. Madam, or Aunt Schuyler,* then,

* Aunt Schuyler's father was called Cuyler.—Lord Howe, killed in 1758 I think at the lines of Ticonderoga; Lord Loudon; General, afterwards Lord Amherſt; General Sir Thomas Gage; Sir William Johnſon; and every other perſon who, during that period, acted any diſtinguiſhed part in the Canadian war, were intimate in her family.—Aunt Schuyler lived in Albany, and was a deſcendant of thoſe Dutch ſettlers by whom the province was occupied when we got it in exchange for Surinam. She was well known over all North America, and to all the Britiſh officers of any note, who ſerved there in the war which concluded at the commencement of the preſent reign. Her father's name was Cuyler. Among the children brought up on Aunt Schuyler's knees, was her huſband's nephew, General Philip Schuyler, to whom the Britiſh troops under Burgoyne ſurrendered at Saratoga; and Brigadier General Cuyler, her own nephew,

then, for ſo, by univerſal conſent, ſhe was indiſcriminately called, in the province of New York, was daughter to one of the firſt and moſt reſpectable characters exiſting in that province, when it fell under the dominion of the Engliſh. His name was Cuyler, and his deſcendants are ſtill numerous and proſperous in that country, to which proſperity my friend's wiſdom and goodneſs contributed not a little. This Cuyler was the perſon who brought over the four Mohawk kings, who were mentioned by the Spectator as exciting ſo much wonder in England. He was introduced to Queen Anne, and had ſeveral converſations with her. She offered to knight him, but he refuſed, not chooſing an elevation unuſual in that country, which would make an invidious diſtinction betwixt him and his friends. Some years after his return, his daughter Catalina, then about

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nephew, who was, and I believe is ſtill, in the ſervice of this country. Several others of them were diſtinguiſhed in their own country, though unknown here.

eighteen,

eighteen, was married to Colonel Schuyler, who poſſeſſed an eſtate above Albany, in the direction which led to the vicinity of the French and hoſtile Indians. He was a perſon whoſe calm, temperate wiſdom, ſingular probity, and thorough knowledge of the affairs and intereſts of the bordering nations, had given him a very great influence, not only in his own province, but among the Indians and Canadian French, whoſe reſpective languages he ſpoke fluently. He was wealthy, and very generous, and ſo public-ſpirited, that though he did all in his power to prevent war, being, in fact, a

"Lover of peace, and friend of human kind;"

yet, when he ſaw it inevitable, he raiſed a regiment at his own expence, and was the firſt who gave character or energy to the provincial troops. To detail inſtances of public virtue in this truly great and good man, would, in fact, be giving the hiſtory of the province during his lifetime. From the place where he lived, he ſtood, as it were,

were, a barrier between the Indians and the inhabitants. Of high and diſtinguiſhed utility was this mild, philoſophic, and Chriſtian character; yet, unleſs he had met a congenial mind, he could neither have done ſo much good, nor prevented ſo much evil. Luckily for the public, they had no family, therefore, greatly reſembling each other, both in taſte, and inclination, and intellectual powers, their efforts were all directed one way. At that time there were not many ſettlers in the province who were acquainted with the Engliſh language; and theſe generally entertained a rooted prejudice, nay averſion, to the very army which came to protect them. In the hoſpitality, intelligence, and pleaſing converſation of this very worthy pair, theſe officers always found a refuge; from them they met with a cordial kindneſs, found advice, and uſeful information. Petty and crooked policy was unknown in this patriarchal family, where a ſucceſſion of adopted children, judiciouſly educated, and a number of domeſtic ſlaves, very kindly and tenderly

treated,

treated, formed a happy community, who were directed with ſuch prudence, that they left leiſure to their rulers for beneficence ſtill more widely diffuſed, and for ſtudies of the moſt uſeful nature. Their acquaintance with elegant literature was, perhaps, not very extenſive; the Spectator, the tragedy of Cato, and the works of Milton and Young, being the only books I remember to have met with, excluſive of hiſtory, biography, and memoirs: of theſe, indeed, there was a very ample collection, which had been carefully read, and thoroughly digeſted, by the owners; and which not only furniſhed very frequently matter of converſation, but materials for reflection, and for that ſyſtem of policy by which their plans were regulated. They had three objects in view, beſides the great primary one of making their large family as good, and wiſe, and happy as poſſible: the firſt was, to prevent injuſtice being done to the Indians, to conſiliate their affections, and to meliorate their condition; the ſecond, to alleviate the hardſhips and difficulties to which the Britiſh troops were expoſed,

Albany, that ſhe might more freely enjoy her choice of ſociety,—people, whom experience in the world, or ſuperior attainments, made ſuitable aſſociates for a mind ſo ſound and ſo enlightened. Her huſband had left her all his poſſeſſions. The uſe ſhe made of her wealth was to keep a kind of open table for ſtrangers who were in any reſpect worthy of admittance; and to educate, in ſucceſſion, the children of different relations of her beloved conſort. Many particulars, relative to this excellent perſon's life and manners, would be well worth preſerving; and, if I outlive her, (for I hope ſhe ſtill does live,) I think I ſhall, ſome time or other, endeavour to pleaſe myſelf at leaſt, by preſerving a memoir of a life ſo valuable and exemplary.—But to the point: In the eighth year of my age, we removed from the fort, to make room for ſome other regiment. Lodging next this good lady in town, I took a great fancy to a beautiful child, a relation whom ſhe was bringing up in the houſe; and my father attracted Madam Schuyler's notice by his piety, not very frequently

time, their houſe was an academy for morals, for manners, and for ſolid knowledge. There the beſt company was always to be met; there the moſt important topics were diſcuſſed, diſpaſſionately and fully; there converſation, properly ſo called, was cultivated, and taſted. The little embelliſhments and elegancies of life, perhaps, had no great ſhare in theſe diſcuſſions; but ſhe,

"Whoſe mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,
And ſtrong, to wield all ſcience worth the name,"

was well ſkilled in the holy ſcriptures, and intimately acquainted with the writings of the beſt divines and hiſtorians. I ſay ſhe, for the Colonel died before I knew her, after they had lived forty years together, in unexampled happineſs; and reared (from the time of their being weaned, till they married, or launched out into active life) fifteen nieces, nephews, or other relatives, ſeveral of whom have ſince been diſtinguiſhed, both for their merit and their uncommon ſucceſs in various purſuits. Soon after the death of her lamented partner, Madam Schuyler removed to the town of Albany,

Albany, that ſhe might more freely enjoy her choice of ſociety,—people, whom experience in the world, or ſuperior attainments, made ſuitable aſſociates for a mind ſo ſound and ſo enlightened. Her huſband had left her all his poſſeſſions. The uſe ſhe made of her wealth was to keep a kind of open table for ſtrangers who were in any reſpect worthy of admittance; and to educate, in ſucceſſion, the children of different relations of her beloved conſort. Many particulars, relative to this excellent perſon's life and manners, would be well worth preſerving; and, if I outlive her, (for I hope ſhe ſtill does live,) I think I ſhall, ſome time or other, endeavour to pleaſe myſelf at leaſt, by preſerving a memoir of a life ſo valuable and exemplary.—But to the point: In the eighth year of my age, we removed from the fort, to make room for ſome other regiment. Lodging next this good lady in town, I took a great fancy to a beautiful child, a relation whom ſhe was bringing up in the houſe; and my father attracted Madam Schuyler's notice by his piety, not very frequently

quently a diſtinguiſhing feature in the military character. I will not tire you with the detail of all the little circumſtances that gradually acquired me the place in her favour which I ever continued to poſſeſs. She ſaw me reading Paradiſe Loſt with delighted attention; ſhe was aſtoniſhed to ſee a child take pleaſure in ſuch a book, and no leſs ſo to obſerve, that I loved to ſit thoughtful by her, and hear the converſations of elderly and grave people.

My father, on leaving the army, took a ſmall farm of her's; ſhe ſtill grew more attached to me, and I lived with her for two winters. She profeſſed a deſire to keep me entirely, if my parents would part with me. I was admitted to the honour of being her conſtant companion, ſlept in her room, and was entertained with many intereſting details, which to hear did I, like Deſdemona, "ſeriouſly incline," and ſhe was gratified with my attention. Whatever culture my mind has received I owe to her. Beyond the knowledge of my firſt duties I ſhould ſcarce have proceeded, or rather, I ſhould

have become almoſt ſavage, in a retreat which precluded me from the advantages of ſociety, as well as thoſe of education. It is now three years ſince I have heard of her. When we left her, the diſcontents againſt the mother-country were daily on the increaſe. Her influence, which was very conſiderable, was all thrown into the oppoſite ſcale. I fear her latter days will be darkened by that diſaffection to the parent ſtate, which ſhe always dreaded would become the conſequence of peace and ſecurity.—Now, dear Sir, you have traced all this premature reflection to its true and veritable ſource; and you will poſſibly call it parrotiſm; nay, what is more, and worſe, you will poſſibly not be far miſtaken.

Adieu! dear Sir. Thank me for making known to you a mind worthy of your own; whoſe place you have in ſome degree ſupplied to

Your attached and grateful, &c. &c.

LETTER XXII.

TO MISS REID.

Fort Auguſtus, June 31, 1773.

I HOPE you are now ſatisfied with my diligent and unwearied endeavours to amuſe you, and make you preſent here as much as poſſible. I don't know as to the worth of the people. They certainly take a great deal too much pleaſure in turning each other into ridicule; one is greatly amuſed; but I don't know that we ought to indulge ſuch amuſement.

I wiſh you ſaw how gay and pleaſing ſummer looks here now, but no one will admire it with me, and delight, as I do, in ſeeing nature unmaſked and unfettered. I feel my mind riſe to a kind of melancholy greatneſs, when I contemplate theſe ſcenes, particularly by moonlight; but I think I ſhould rejoice *once more* if I met with one that taſted all this as I do. I am ſeized with longings for you that are very pain-

ful; nobody will care for me here, because nobody will underſtand me. I cannot blame them. I am too ruſtic, too ſimple at leaſt, for people of the world, with whom manner is every thing; and though myſelf uneducated, I painfully feel I have too much refinement, too much delicacy for uninformed people, with whom I feel no point of union but ſimplicity. 'Tis pity there are no hermiteſſes; I ſhould juſt now like to be one. All the ſpirit that diverted you in my deſcription of our garriſonians, is evaporated. They are diverting originals, but their reſtleſſneſs and diſcontent provoke me. Military people always ſpeak with pleaſure of the place where they have been, or where they are going, but never are ſatisfied where they are. One ſees them too near here. They are generally well-bred, and entertaining, but often hard and heartleſs at bottom; and always arbitrary in their families, when they have them. They rail conſtantly at this place, yet, perhaps, they will never be ſo happy when they leave it. I would rather be a beetle under a ſtone, than a

dragon

dragon fly, blown with every blaſt.—Good night; I am peeviſh, but not at you, ſpirit of truth and gentleneſs!

"Meek nature's child, again adieu!"

LETTER XXIII.

TO MISS OURRY (NOW MRS. F——R.)

Fort Auguſtus, May 24, 1774.

You ſee I have loſt no time in complying with your moſt agreeable propoſal. Yes, my beloved ſiſter, let us, ſolitary beings as we are, in our reſpective families, ſupply that endearing relation to each other. You have only anticipated me, for the thought was my own. Of courſe you had a right to it. Kindred and united minds like ours ſhould ſurely maintain a cloſer intercourſe than we have hitherto had it in our power to do. Our ſeparation has made us experience the mournful ſolitude of the heart, "the craving void left aching in the breaſt," occaſioned by the want of that luxury of affection, ima-

gination, and intelligence, which we have ſo long ſhared together. The beautiful caves at Inchnacardach, the wild hanging gardens of Glendoe, and the echoing glen by the waterfal at Culachy, reſtore your image to my ſolitary muſings, only to make me feel your loſs the more. Never will any one enjoy theſe ſcenes with me as you have done. Never was the true, the genuine love of nature ſo ſtrong, in a perſon bred in the very midſt of that ſociety that was, moſt of all, eſtranged from it. Can you ever forget the ſweet ſummer evening, behind the great white roſe buſh, when we firſt found each other out? Sacred for ever be the hour to virtue and to friendſhip! The ſmile of nature brightening every object round that enchanting garden; the full ſonorous murmur of the Oich over its fantaſtic gravelly ſhores; and the thruſh's veſper hymn from Thicket Iſland, ſo near, ſo inacceſſible, and ſo attractive, all opened and ſoothed our minds, and half an hour did as much, as half an age would have done in any other place; opened our hearts, and

made

made us know we were worthy to mingle them. Sure, if we have guardian angels, they muſt have ſmiled together on an union, productive of ſuch innocent felicity; may I not add, uſeful improvement? How ſadly I look at eight on the glacis, where we uſed to ſpend the full hour from that to nine, in convoying and reconvoying each other. Theſe tender recollections are indeed "pleaſant yet mournful to the ſoul." I cannot complain much of ſolitude in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word; we are now become acquainted with our neighbours all around, and ſee them often. You know what a wide word neighbourhood is in this thin peopled country. Beſide, we are all now tamed and ſoftened, and live on ſuch a good footing with each other, that we are *like young lambkins ſporting in a green meadow*, as your antiquated friend expreſſed it. I, never being uſed to ſee much company, particularly fine company, have nothing to complain of on that ſcore; but, O! my Nancy, aſk your own heart what pleaſure mine finds in the ſociety of common acquaintances, ſelfiſh, ſuper-

ficial, and poſſibly deceitful. Chriſtina Macpherſon ſtands a worthy exception to this general character, which you will eaſily perceive to be the drawing of chagrin. Yet her ſound underſtanding and ſteady attachment, though valuable in themſelves, cannot ſupply the place of the numberleſs, nameleſs, links by which our minds were connected; thoſe converſations where perfect freedom, without the leaſt tincture of rude familiarity, unveiled the inmoſt thoughts of our hearts, which muſt be depraved and degenerated, before our mutual affection can be abated, far leſs extinguiſhed. I know not where I am wandering, but I meant to tell you, that there are a thouſand things which occur in the courſe of my reading and obſervation, to delight and intereſt me, of which ſhe has no idea; for this, ſhe is not to blame, but I am to be pitied. Were it not for the correſpondence I keep up with you and my dear Harriet, I ſhould find this exile gloomy indeed. Yet, though I feel unwilling to ſubmit to its wholeſome bitterneſs, my reaſon informs me that even this exile has its

ad-

advantages, conſidered in one point of view. Your penetration enabled you to diſcover in my mind a ſtrange mixture of wild enthuſiaſm of imagination, with indolent tranquillity of temper. The retired manner in which I have been brought up, equally remote from the refined artifice of higher life, and the neceſſary activity and confined notions of the mob, have nouriſhed my peculiarities. So has the little company I have kept; theſe were moſtly of the ſame primitive caſt, and lay under the ſame diſadvantages of being equally unfit for vulgar and what the world calls elegant ſociety. The mournful event* to which you are no ſtranger, blaſting the flattering picture of felicity which my heart had too fondly indulged, fixed in my mind a caſt of penſive thought, which has been alternately ſuſtained by the tenderneſs of friendſhip, and the reveries of ſolitude; ſo that I am now neither fit for any other ſituation nor deſirous of a change, leſt it ſhould prove

"A bitter change—ſeverer for ſevere."

* The death of a young friend!

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If heaven ſhould favour our ardent wiſhes of once more meeting, I hope the change will not be a diſadvantageous one. I ſhould value your ſociety more than ever, now I know what it is to be deprived of that or any other ſuitable to my taſte. Whatever change a neceſſary habit of prudence and reſerve may have made on my manners, you will find my heart the ſame, and we ſhall meet as if we parted yeſterday: my ſoul foretells that this meeting, and all we have ſeen ſince we parted, will only make us value each other the more.

I wiſh we were once more together, with the privilege of teaſing poor *Fungy*, by affecting learning, and miſ-pronouncing hard words. What a dilemma his deſire of appearing gallant and well bred, combining with his real hatred for the ſex, uſed to reduce him to! He might have furniſhed a new character for a comedy. Shall we never more hold him in chace, through the windings of the zig-zag road, where he uſed

to

to pant before us like another Falſtaff, little knowing that we only wiſhed to frighten him. I have often ſmiled by myſelf at the recollection of our induſtry in tormenting him, and never hear a hard word murdered but what *a crowned cat in a nation of ideas** brings him into my head. I was ſo much entertained by your lively and humorous deſcription of your place of reſidence and its inhabitants, that I could not reſiſt reading a part of it to my father, who was quite charmed with it, and, having taken his tour of duty through many parts of Ireland, is the better qualified to judge of the veri-ſimilitude of your deſcription. Vanity has her votaries every where; but on the Hibernian ſhore ſhe is more devoutly worſhipped than any ſaint of the country. She holds the place there which pride does here: I don't know how to ſtrike the balance. Vanity is in better humour, but pride tells fewer lies. The firſt is more

* Concatenation of ideas: a word invented to teaſe Captain D'Arippe, of the 15th, who of all things dreaded female pedants.

pleaſing, the latter ſafer. May the dominion of either be far from our peaceful boſoms. I conclude this letter of declamation, by telling you it ſhall be directly followed by one of faithful narration, giving you a brief hiſtory of this little epitome of the great world you are ranging through. Short may your eccentric courſe prove. If I were a ſtar, I ſhould like to be a fixed one. Be you in the mean time my guiding planet, and ſhed ſweet influence on your unaltered friend.

LETTER XXIV.

TO MISS OURRY.

Fort Auguſtus, March 10, 1775.

MY DEAREST,

YOURS came juſt in time to relieve my anxiety, and prevent me from abſolutely deſpairing of ever hearing more from you. Need I tell you my uneaſineſs, or how I rejoiced on receiving another proof of your continued love? My pleaſure changed too ſoon to melancholy, when I underſtood the dreadful dilemma you are all in about this American voyage, which impends too ſurely over you: I had indeed heard that the 15th were under orders for America, but did not dream of Captain Ourry's accompanying them; and I examined every newſpaper in hopes of finding his name changed, or ſold out. How grieved and ſurprized was I to hear that he is in danger of being once more torn from the embraces of a family

ſo

ſo dear to him, who have already ſpent ſo many tedious years in lamenting his abſence, and this to plunge into the moſt cruel and horrid of wars; whoſe moſt deſirable event can be only that of ſucceſsfully devaſtating with bloodſhed and deſtruction a country, late the moſt peaceful and happy on earth, but never, never to be happy more, end this as it may. The cup was too full to hold, yet I did not think it would be ſplit thus rudely. How dear muſt victory be bought with the lives of our fellow ſubjects and former friends! But I will no longer torment myſelf or you, with giving vent to all the ſad reflections ariſing from this moſt painful ſubject. Yet why were you not more diſtinct and particular? Alas! I fear all our prayers and hopes for the deſired reconciliation, will prove fruitleſs. The divine juſtice ſeems about to diſplay itſelf in taking ſignal vengeance on the iniquities of the times. The corruption of the parent ſtate, which leads her to an inordinate enjoyment of thoſe advantages, that ſhe poſſeſſes in pre-eminence of all others, and

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her ungrateful neglect of the fource of all thofe bleffings, feems arrived at its height; and will be requited by the ingratitude of thofe colonies which owe their exiftence to her. There was a time when fuch a half-moral, half-political harangue from your friend would have made you laugh; but now fatal neceffity urges us to take more than a common fhare in the public calamity—calamity how heavy, and how general, when we, who, in the fequeftered vale of life, might be fuppofed exempted from any other fhare than the tribute which humanity pays to the woes of human kind, are forced for thofe deareft to us to have our hearts wrung with anguifh hitherto unknown! I deeply fympathize with your fufferings, on account of the worthy Captain's illnefs, and that of your good mother. Alas! my dear girl, we were fifters by fentiment and inclination before, but now I may hail you as a fifter fufferer. You have met, or are likely to meet with the train of forrows that have obfcured the morning of my youth. Thofe

I ac-

I account ſalutary drops of bitterneſs thrown into my cup, leſt the tranquil eaſineſs of my temper, and that range of imagination which furniſhes me with a boundleſs ſtore of ideal pleaſures, ſhould raiſe my enjoyment of life beyond what is deſtined for this imperfect ſtate. You will too feelingly trace the reſemblance which I allude to; the daily ſufferings and broken ſpirits of a beloved parent, burſting aſunder the tendereſt ties of affection, and hurrying me away, far, very far, from thoſe whoſe preſence was life and joy to me! I hope you will not finiſh the reſemblance, by being forced to croſs the Atlantic with the ſame deſponding reluctance which hung upon the ſpirits of your friend on a ſimilar occaſion. Never ſhall I forget the emotion with which I ſaw the Cape of Neverſink melt into air; when I bade the laſt farewell to the dear loved coaſt of America, which I am now certain I ſhall never more behold. My dear friends were beginning to be perſecuted for their loyalty, before we came away, for

even

even then the ſtorm began to lower.—Poor loſt Letch*! his kingdom is not of this world, that is evident. What a cruſh to the ſpirit of a young ſoldier, to be forced to forſake a profeſſion he was ſo attached to, at the very time that military merit had the faireſt chance for diſtinction and reward! I wiſh you had given more particulars of his parting behaviour. I am glad he ſpoke ſo plainly, becauſe it no doubt relieved his mind, and the aſſurance of your compaſſion and eſteem, which was all he could reaſonably hope, would be ſo conſoling to him. You will think my expectations romantic, as uſual, but ſtill I will hope our friend Henry has embraced the only profeſſion he is fitted for. The zealous fervour of his attachments,

* Henry Letch was the ſon of a phyſician, of the ſame name, in Mark Lane. He was ſent very early into the army, full of romantic prejudices, which led him into boundleſs profuſion and endleſs errors. With great purity of heart, and uprightneſs of intention, he very early diſſipated his patrimony, and ſoon after was ſo much in debt as to be obliged to ſell his commiſſion, about the period when this letter was written.

his

his glowing admiration of ſuperior excellence, and the ardour of his conceptions, will find adequate objects, where the affections of his heart, and ſervices of his future life, will, I truſt, be dedicated. How happy thoſe whom the ſtorms of life drive ſo early to their beſt, their final harbour! That abhorrence of vice which would be a continual ſource of vexation, in ſtruggling through the ſcenes of active life, will be very well ſuited to the duties of a paſtor; beſides, the emphatic eloquence which makes every word of our poor friend ſo intereſting, will be peculiarly ſuited to the pulpit.—How many new things have I to tell you of? A new couſin, whom I am much pleaſed with. He has learning, taſte, and underſtanding. I find him in many reſpects very congenial with my diſpoſition. Then we have got a new church, built by ſubſcription, mind, that it would do your heart good to ſee, and your ſoul good to hear ſermon in:—poor Mrs. Brown!—how much ſympathy ſhe claims. My old play-fellow George is now doing penance at Boſton. We have been

quite

quite animated all ſummer, with flocks of wild geeſe from your country. Lament with me, for we have had another ſhip load of emigrants, marching off to their Chaldea, for ſuch I know it will appear to them. I have a good mind to pray for a heart of ſtone. Your old friend, the Honourable Captain Murray*, commands the invalids here, and paſſed the ſummer amongſt us. He is more helpleſs than you ſaw him, but has ſtill equal ſpirits, and amiable manners. We often converſed about you, and he begs you may not forget him. Mr. G. left us laſt week to be ſettled in Badenoch. Our parting was—almoſt affecting ---------- he was proud of your notice and remembrance, and begs me to aſſure you of his cordial good wiſhes.

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Pray write immediately on receipt of this. Stay at home one night from your Hibernian Ranelagh, and renounce noiſe and

* William Murray, brother to the Earl of Dunmore; who had formerly reſided near Captain Ourry, and was intimately known to that family.

head-ach

what was right, it might anſwer noble purpoſes. But, alas! when conſcious we no longer deſerve eſteem, we graſp at admiration, and endeavour to conceal our wants of real happineſs and ſelf-enjoyment, under the veil of external gaiety and artificial mirth. The gloſſy varniſh of politeneſs, which, like the ſkin of a ſnake, though bright and pleaſing to the view, is cold and ſlippery to the touch, we are taught to ſubſtitute for the lively glow and artleſs tenderneſs of true benevolence. Be merciful even to the perverſion of Iriſh hoſpitality. Exceſs of good nature firſt makes them wretched, and then neceſſity makes them cunning. To be truly and auſterely good among ſuch a "perverſe and crooked generation," requires the reſolution of a confeſſor at leaſt. But you muſt at all events preſerve your charity, were it but to guard the purity of your own heart.

Occaſional ſolitude is a bleſſing which every well regulated mind would long for, if deprived of that privilege. Remember what our favourite Young ſays of

"Our

LETTER XXV.

TO MISS OURRY.

Fort Auguſtus, May 26, 1775.

To rejoin—I can the better comprehend your *pair of ducks*, as we have now in the garriſon a couple (not a pair) who are newly arrived from Ireland, and always talk with fond regret of Dublin, as the centre of all their joys. They have ſo much external and ſuperficial elegance, and ſo little of that refinement of ſentiment and manners which emanates from the heart, that I never ſee them without thinking of your new acquired friends. They are natives of this country, and have a ſingular hiſtory,

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They are fond of company without real hoſpitality, or the leaſt regard for their gueſts, whom they look upon as merely implements to kill time with. They behave to each other with a kind of civility which ſeems

ſeems rather a ſubſtitute for tenderneſs, than a proof of it. There is a negative merit which muſt be allowed to thoſe well-bred people, who never offend or oblige you, but are ſatisfied with amuſing and being amuſed. They are, perhaps, ſafer than people of mere virtue, who have quicker feelings and more earneſtneſs. They have neither acrimony enough to feel quick diſguſt at vice and folly, nor benevolence to be delighted with the excellencies of God's creatures. They neither love nor hate cordially, but juſt conſider people as cards to play with. Now I can't endure to be a card, ſince I can't aſpire at being queen of hearts. Yet if you knew how eagerly I ſet about gardening, and how ſtoutly I laboured at tranſplanting, you would be apt to call me queen of ſpades. I have dwelt thus minutely on theſe characters, as I think them a ſample or counterpoiſe of thoſe you daily meet with. I am ſorry the general rage for diſſipation, and your indignant feelings at it, ſhould lead you to think your mind contracted;—

"I do

"I do not think my ſiſter ſo to ſeek
And ſo unprincipled in virtue's book,
And that calm peace which goodneſs boſoms ever,"

as to ſuffer the depravity which prevails around her to produce any laſting ſentiment, but pity, which muſt indeed on ſome occaſions be mingled with contempt. Whatever you ſay in a momentary heat, I am ſure your good ſenſe and kindly affections will preſerve you from a gloomy diſguſt at human nature, on account of the vice and abſurdity of individuals, to whoſe nature it belongs to ruſh into full diſplay, while the pious, the modeſt, and the good, ſerve God and their fellow-creatures in quiet obſcurity.

When we forſake the paths of nature and ſimplicity, in a reſtleſs purſuit of amuſement, vanity and oſtentation generally take the lead of all the paſſions. That principle which leads the human mind ſo eagerly to deſire the approbation of its fellow-mortals, was certainly placed within us as a ſpur, not only to the deſire, but to the attainment of applauſe; and if people applauded only

what

what was right, it might anſwer noble purpoſes. But, alas! when conſcious we no longer deſerve eſteem, we graſp at admiration, and endeavour to conceal our wants of real happineſs and ſelf-enjoyment, under the veil of external gaiety and artificial mirth. The gloſſy varniſh of politeneſs, which, like the ſkin of a ſnake, though bright and pleaſing to the view, is cold and ſlippery to the touch, we are taught to ſubſtitute for the lively glow and artleſs tenderneſs of true benevolence. Be merciful even to the perverſion of Iriſh hoſpitality. Exceſs of good nature firſt makes them wretched, and then neceſſity makes them cunning. To be truly and ſufficiently good among ſuch a "perverſe and crooked generation," requires the reſolution of a confeſſor at leaſt. But you muſt at all events preſerve your charity, were it but to guard the purity of your own heart.

Occaſional ſolitude is a bleſſing which every well regulated mind would long for, if deprived of that privilege. Remember what our favourite Young ſays of

"Our

" Our reaſon, guardian angel and our God."

I have a particular pleaſure in reading the pencil-marked lines that we compared together. I wiſh we could read ſome more choſen books in that way, whenever we meet, as meet we ſhall, I truſt:—we may then have the ſatisfaction of tracing the ſimilarity of our reſpective taſtes. You deſire a hiſtory of the garriſon, but ſo bad a newſmonger and narrator am I, that unleſs I go through it *a la militaire*, ſomewhat in the order of the muſter-roll, I ſhall loſe myſelf. The *prime personage* then remains much as you left him; if any thing, he mends; ſtays more at home, and is content to pry leſs. But whether this be reformation or decline, this deponent ſaith not. G.'s good nature and ſalt-water wit continue to grow and proſper. He will never want a butt while we have a ruler. I have a notion I, too, furniſh one occaſionally; but it is wit without valour, for his is always an abſent butt. I have one way of keeping theſe gentry in order; I can ſee they dread my contempt. Now, next to being loved, the

beſt thing is to be feared; and when people know you incapable of meanneſs and deceit, depend upon it they will fear you. Mrs. N. is ſtill the alternate prey of doubts and deſpondency: you would pity her if you knew half what ſhe ſuffers. Yet who can imagine it better than you, by what you ſaw your own mother ſuffer in the like ſituation. To be ſure Mrs. N.'s feelings are on no occaſion very lively; yet, though we children of fancy ſuffer more than others, both have many conſolations. Beſides the ſympathy of friendſhip, and the ardor of hope, we build the prettieſt caſtles imaginable, tenant them with courteous knights and virtuous dames, and then ſit, rent-free, in theſe airy dwellings. Mrs. N. ſeldom hears of her huſband; he is priſoner ſomewhere on the frontier of Pennſylvania. ------ Now I hope I have made the whole garriſon known to you. Our new Surgeon is an original, whom I would wiſh you to know, but I have not colours wherewith to paint him. He was very ſtiff and pedantic, but that begins to wear off. He

is,

is, I dare ſay, well principled; but, though he has ſolid learning, I believe, and very ſound ſenſe I am ſure,—he has neither fancy nor feeling, and has the preſumption to laugh at ſentiment; you may believe I grow very angry, and attempt to be ſevere, and than he rallies me about morbid ſenſibility, as he calls it. He is very provoking, and quite incorrigible. I always tell him he will meet an Iphigenia ſomewhere*. Remember me reſpectfully to your father and mother, and kindly to every one you think has any kindneſs for me. Adieu, deareſt Nancy! only ſiſter—beloved friend. Farewel.

Tom cat is well, and lives in clover,
But Perry's harmleſs life is over:
To tell you that he died quite mad,
Will melt your heart and make you ſad:
But when you know he ſleeps in peace,
Methinks your grief, like mine, ſhould ceaſe.

* He is now happily married, and ſettled in Edinburgh; is a particular friend of the Author's, and a valuable member of ſociety.

LETTER XXVI.

TO MISS OURRY.

Fort William, Feb. 15, 1776.

(The month of our nativity.)

My deareſt girl! I moſt ſincerely forgive your perplexing and mortifying ſilence, and moſt willingly attribute the chaſm in our correſpondence to any other motive than indifference, altogether inconſiſtent as it is with the ſincerity and affection which form ſo great and diſtinguiſhing a part of your character. But now that my forgiveneſs may be as ſincere as I know your penitence to be, let me, with my accuſtomed freedom, warn you of the conſequences of indulging that unfriendly indolence, leſs pardonable in your active, lively diſpoſition, than in my eaſy and indolent one. I have admired this vivacity without envy, and am therefore entitled to reap the fruits of it. I was vain of your attainments, and always thought myſelf

myſelf deficient of nothing which you poſ-ſeſſed; it was enough for me that we had them between us. This is digreſſion—but I reſume. In the preſent unſettled habits of your life, there is nothing you ought to be ſo careful of, as cheriſhing thoſe friendſhips which have given you ſo much pleaſure, and done you ſo much good in your earlier years; for indeed, as poor Pope ſaid when he was dying, and ſaw things as they are, "There is nothing worth living for but virtue and friendſhip;" and friendſhip is a part of virtue. When the one withers, the other will droop. Friendſhip is the miſletoe growing on the oak of virtue. I fancy when the Druids cut the miſletoe with golden ſickles, they had a kind of preſcience of the dear and cloſe ties that gold was deſtined in after ages to divide. Seriouſly, if the friendſhips that have formed the delight and comfort of the earlier ſtage of life were once extinguiſhed in your breaſt, no later formed attachment would ever ſupply their loſs. You will meet with many agreeable acquaintances in your *peregrinations*; nay, in the country,

where you are, you run a chance of being overwhelmed with civility by the one ſex, and compliment by the other; but where will you find the playful innocence of ——, the ſolid ſenſe and rational attachment of ——, or the ſincere and conſtant affection of her whom you have thus long neglected? Yes, my dear ſiſter, in the beſt ſenſe of the word, ſiſter of my heart, and of my vowed affection, if you allow trivial motives to eſtrange you from your friends, as their remembrance cannot die in your heart, it will only live to torment you. I could not endure to think of my friends when I could no longer think of them with pleaſure. Any thing may be endured but remorſe; 'tis the dreaded future puniſhment begun on earth. Sweetly mournful is the recollection of thoſe with whom and for whom we have lived in tender confidence and unity. Should they depart for ever, when we can look back blameleſs, in the midſt of our ſorrow, we are pleaſed with the conſciouſneſs that the ſacred approbation of virtue conſecrates the tender regret. Tranſient intimacies will never

never fill the gloomy vacuity which extinguiſhed affections leave in the heart. Vainly, if that were the caſe, would you endeavour to fill the chaſm in your mind with amuſements ending in ſatiety and diſguſt. Now, in my turn, let me aſk pardon for theſe tranſgreſſions on your patience; be aſſured they are owing to the anxiety of a heart which, though fully convinced of your preſent regard, dreads few things ſo much as your future indifference. You would have gratified me by ſaying more about your new acquaintances and preſent employments. What have you been doing? Your worked gown unfiniſhed, all your friends neglected, and all this in a place ſo remote, and, by your own deſcription, unſocial! What will become of you in the hurry and diſſipation of Dublin, if you contrive to be thus myſteriouſly engroſſed on the banks of the notorious Shannon, which one might ſuppoſe to be the choſen retreat of dulneſs? Yet, when I think of it, it is not lead, but braſs, that people are ſaid to acquire by plunging into it. Alas! for our poor unhappy

"Cry Sirrah! and give him a blow with my crook," as he did to his dog Tray, for fawning when his loverſhip was out of humour.—Well, my father and I proceeded by ourſelves, and, after much "fair diſcourſe," arrived by tea time, where I found Mrs. Newmarch and the Miſs Campbells Duntroon waiting for me. I leave you to judge my feelings at meeting my dear mother, and finding myſelf ſafely and happily arrived among a circle of kind friends.

We have had a viſit from the new-married couple, who are doubtleſs oddly matched. "Speak ye who beſt can tell," whether ſons of light or not, and inform us how this woman came to take that man, who is a good creature too; but her refinement, and her proſpects, and her brother! She is the perſon whom Johnſon mentions in his Tour, whom he met at Raſay, and again at her brother's houſe in the Iſle of Sky. She looks much up to that ſurly ſage, and receives letters and preſents of books from him.

The eldeſt of the fair Argathelians is really aſtoniſhing for womanly appearance; and I

am

Deareſt Nancy, let this ſad example teach us, to go higher than eſſays and novels, for our divinity and morality. Theſe muſt be gathered with labour, and are worth the labour of getting.—Now ſpirit of Lycurgus, and ſoul of Leonidas, and ſhade of king Agis,—and all other laconic powers! aſſiſt me, to cram, and crowd, and cruſh together in a few pithy ſentences, the narration of domeſtic tranſactions. Know, then, that after the diſſolution and ſcatteration of laſt year's happy trio, another ſprung up in its room, of which triangle I am the baſe, as you right worthily were of the former; Chriſtina made one of the ſides, and you eaſily

an extravagant taſte for elegance and falſe refinements. He was fond of walking with us, reading to us, &c. And we hoped, betwixt reaſoning and ridicule, to wean him from his abſurdities—but to little purpoſe. Adverſity, however, ſeemed, to produce the deſired effect. He took orders, and obtained ſome chaplaincy about Dublin Caſtle, and ſeemed to apply ſeriouſly to the duties of his function; but was, about the year 1778, cut off by the gaol fever, which he had caught by a voluntary attendance on ſick priſoners.

eaſily gueſs the other. Well, for a time we rejoiced together with perfect harmony, being in ſuch an eaſy ſauntering, playful humdrum way, that we all inſenſibly became more and more neceſſary to each other, becauſe in fact we ſaw no great motive to care for any one elſe. However, this was too good to laſt. I found the thermometer riſing too high in a certain point. I thought it was being too like the world to ſee what was right in my friend's caſes only, and not practiſe it in my own, and ſo finally, I did what formerly I adviſed you to do; and now, being very proud, we think it incumbent to be very ſulky. But every nurſery maid knows that the beſt cure for ſulkineſs is juſt—to let it alone. Adieu! my dear friend; tell thoſe that remember me, that I never forget any one I ever cared for. I have a thouſand good wiſhes to ſend you, which this paper cannot hold. Remember me, and ſet it in your tablets, or——my ghoſt will haunt you.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MISS EWING, GLASGOW.

Fort Auguſtus, June 5th, 1778.

Now, as you have my letter from Inverneſs, containing much weighty matter, it only remains to tell you, that I met my father, in the Governor's carriage, at the Fall of Fyers, vulgarly called the halfway houſe; and of joy there was abundance, which conſoled me for parting in the morning with thoſe dear creatures, Mr. and Mrs. Tod, and various other privations, one of which, though a fanciful, was to me a heavy one; for the delight I ſhould have had in riding through the woods on the Loch ſide was ſo embittered by thoughts of how you would have enjoyed it; and then I was ſo teaſed with the affected rural taſte of one of the Inverneſs beaux, who accompanied me, that I was tempted, like Phœbe's lover, in the ſong—To

"Cry Sirrah! and give him a blow with my crook," as he did to his dog Tray, for fawning when his loverſhip was out of humour.—Well, my father and I proceeded by ourſelves, and, after much "fair diſcourſe," arrived by tea time, where I found Mrs. Newmarch and the Miſs Campbells Duntroon waiting for me. I leave you to judge my feelings at meeting my dear mother, and finding myſelf ſafely and happily arrived among a circle of kind friends.

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The eldeſt of the fair Argathelians is really aſtoniſhing for womanly appearance; and I

am

am told her genius, &c. I heard much of her at Perth. By all I hear and ſee, I have taken it in my head that ſhe is a kind of female Quixote, but a very improvable ſubject; and when ſhe begins to know the importance of common duties, and the value of native elegance, and modeſt merit unaccompanied by talent; when ſhe diſcovers that there is ſomething in the world worth loving, beſides virtue mounted on ſtilts, and genius ſoaring among the clouds; ſo benevolent a mind, brought down from theſe falſe elevations, may be the delight of her friends, and an ornament to ſociety.

Here follows a liſt of worthies, to whom in my name you muſt ſay ſomething tender, grateful, kind, and emphatic, according to the various characters you addreſs, beginning always with Miſs Pagan. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * By diſcharging theſe debts of love, you will make me eaſy. Then ſhall the ſoul of your friend reſt in this *Limbus Patrum*, purifying and refining to fit it for the ſociety of thoſe bleſſed, who inhabit Clydeſide, Cartſide, and

and Kelvinſide, and ſay their prayers in the dear land of my nativity. Adieu, collectively, ye worthies of Clydeſdale! Farewell, individually, friend of my forlorn heart.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO MISS EWING, GLASGOW.

Fort Auguſtus, June 8th, 1778.

* * * * * * *

* * * The joy of Chriſtie's meeting and mine paſſes deſcription. Yet ſhe is ſomehow melancholy, and for this there is ſome cauſe. She has too ſtrong and ſteady a mind, and is too conſtantly occupied to ſink cauſeleſs. Her ſiſter-in-law is, when in health, a well-bred good-humoured woman; but ſo nervous, and thoſe complaints recur ſo often, and are ſo fatal to the peace, and to the temper, of thoſe afflicted with them, who are generally uneven and capricious; in her caſe this only ſhows itſelf in ſudden attachments, and a great fondneſs

fondneſs for new favourites, and prejudices againſt others at firſt ſight. I am at preſent a great favourite, but no ways deſirous of cultivating that favour. I am not in a humour for ſtudying tempers; the days are faſt receding that ſaw me prone to admire, and to deck every one, merely tolerable, with a thouſand fancied charms. Beſides, I grew very deaf to the lamentations of thoſe, who meet no perſon or thing that is right or upright. The new light that has flaſhed in on my mind, ſhows me that the evil lies often in the ſweet ſufferer's own downy boſom. Now I muſt not diſmiſs this "Sunbeam of the Iſle of Miſt," without telling you that ſhe is formed like a nymph, moves like a grace, ſings like a ſyren, and plays like a muſe; in ſhort, if ſhe wore a maſk, we ſhould expect an angel; but, alas! where the loves and ſmiles were wont to live ſo amicably together, and play at hide and ſeek in dimples, their arch foe, the ſmall-pox, has exalted his repulſive trophies; and ſure never was victory ſo complete. Now here is enough of Culachy goſſipping. But there

are

are two new ſtars riſen in our horiſon, of whom I muſt ſay ſomething. The eldeſt Miſs C——, then, is a wonderful girl of her age, ſcarce ſixteen, has a fine underſtanding, ſeems good hearted, and has a turn for reflection, which, properly directed, might be a ſource of improvement and advantage to her. But her mind ſeems to have been in a hot-bed; every thing is premature beyond the ſimplicity natural to that age. I cannot develope her: one minute I think I know her, and the next ſhe is out of ſight: I am ſure ſhe does not wiſh to deceive me, but ſo young a philoſopher may poſſibly deceive herſelf. In the mean time ſhe is much inclined to muſe and warble, and would have me tune a reſponſive lyre; but her muſe and mine are of a different family; her's is in waiting from dawn to twilight, and moreover "viſits her nightly," while my inſpirations come "Like angel viſits, few and far between," and have for ſome time ceaſed entirely. Two or three times ſhort anſwers have been forced out of me, all deprecating further ſolicitation. I

ſend you two very comely efforts of hers. One ſtanza of my laſt ſhall ſerve as a ſample:

The leiſure hour alone the Muſe requires,
The ſtill retreat to peace and virtue dear;
From vulgar eyes conceals her ſacred fires,
But calls on heaven, and heaven-taught ſouls to hear.

But this hint is unavailing; and ſo are all my attempts at reformation; nothing indeed but woful experience can reclaim wilful wit, though its ways are not ways of pleaſantneſs nor yet its paths peace. But it is a ſad thing to want a mother, and be toſt about among artificial characters, of whom I have ſeen ſo many, even in this retreat, that I ſicken more and more for you and the other children of ſimplicity, in whom "all my delights are placed." Adieu, my daiſy, my violet, my all that is native and genuine. Fondly adieu!

LETTER XXIX.

TO MISS JANE EWING, GLASGOW.

Fort Auguſtus, July 1ſt, 1778.

MY DEAR JANE,

Now that I am ſettled, and have leiſure to be angry, I am out of all patience at not hearing from any of you this age. I had letters by Perth only once ſince I arrived. As for my trunk, it has been ſo well treated by your couſin, that it ſtill remains peaceably, though the carrier is arrived. What to do or ſay, I know not, and far leſs what to put on * * * * * *

I loſt a good conveyance for a letter, and that a letter to Lady Iſabella, by going on a grand party of pleaſure on the Loch. There was the Governor and his new eſpouſed love, who, by the bye, is very well conſidering, frank and cheerful, and ſo forth; and there were the two Miſs Campbells Duntroon, blithe bonny laſſes; and

and there was the noble Admiral of the lake, and his fair ſiſter; and the Doctor, and another beau, whom you have not the honour to know. We went on board our galley, which is a fine little veſſel, with a commodious and elegant cabin.

The day was charming, the ſcene around was in itſelf ſublime and cheerful, enlivened by ſunſhine and the muſic of the birds, that anſwered each other loudly from the woody mountains on each ſide of the Loch. On leaving the fort, we fired our ſwivels, and diſplayed our colours. On our arrival oppoſite Glenmoriſton, we repeated this ceremony, and ſent out our boat for as many of the family as choſe to come on board. The Laird himſelf, his beautiful daughter, and her admirer, obeyed the ſummons: they dined with us, and then we proceeded to the celebrated fall of Fyers.

I had ſeen this wonder before, but never to ſuch advantage. Strangers generally come from the high road, and look down upon it; but the true ſublime and beautiful is to be attained by going from the lake by

Fyers

Fyers Houſe, as we did, to look up to it. We landed at the river's mouth, and had to walk up near a mile, through picturesque openings, in a grove of weeping birch, ſo freſh with the ſpray of the fall, that its odours exhale conſtantly. We arrived at one of the moſt ſingular and romantic ſcenes the imagination can conceive. At the foot of the rock over which the river falls is a ſmall circular bottom, in which riſes, as it were, a little verdant hillock of a triangular form, which one might imagine an altar erected to the impetuous Naiad of this overwhelming ſtream; this ruſtic ſhrine, and the verdant ſanctuary in which it ſtands, are adorned by the hand of nature with a rich profuſion of beautiful flowers and luxuriant herbage. No wonder, overhung as it is with gloomy woods and abrupt precipices, no rude blaſt viſits this ſacred ſolitude; while perpetual miſts, from the cataract that thunders above it, keep it for ever freſh with dewy moiſture; and the "ſhowery priſm" bends its ſplendid arch continually over the humid flowers that adorn its entrance.

trance. Now do not think me romancing, and I ſhall account to you in ſome meaſure for the formation and fertility of this charming little *Delta*. Know, then, that the nymph of the Fyers, abundantly clamorous in ſummer, becomes in winter a moſt tremendous fury, ſweeping every thing before her with inconceivable violence. The little eminence which riſes ſo oddly in "nature's ſofteſt freſheſt lap," was moſt probably at firſt a portion of rock forced down by the violence of the wintry torrent, and as the river covers this ſpot in floods, ſucceſſive winters might bring down rich ſoil, which, arreſted by the fragment above ſaid, in proceſs of time formed the altar I ſpeak of. Along with this rich ſediment left by the ſubſiding waters, are conveyed the ſeeds and roots of plants from all the varieties of ſoil which the torrent has ravaged: hence "flowers of all hues, and without thorn the roſe;" at leaſt I could expect flowers worthy of Paradiſe in this luxuriant receſs. While you ſtand in this inchanted vale, there is nothing but verdure, muſic, and tranquillity around

around you; but if you look to either ſide, abrupt rocks and unſupported trees growing from their cleſts, threaten to overwhelm you. Looking back, you ſee the river foaming through a narrow opening, and thundering and raging over broken crags almoſt above your heads; looking downwards, you ſee the ſame river, after having been collected in a deep baſin at your feet, rolling rapidly over ſteep rocks, like ſteps of ſtairs, till at laſt it winds quietly through the ſweet peaceful ſcene at Fyers Houſe, and loſes itſelf in Loch Neſs. Now to what purpoſe have I taken up my own time and yours with this tedious deſcription, which after all, gives you no juſt idea of the place?

When we returned on board, our ſpirits, being by this time exhauſted with walking and wonder, and talking and thunder, and ſo forth, began to flag. One lady, always delicate and nervous, was ſeized with a fit, a hyſterical one, that frighted us all. I cut her laces, ſuppreſſed her ſtruggles, and ſupported her in my arms during the paroxyſm, which laſted near two hours. What

you

you muſt allow to be very generous in the company, not one of them ſeemed to envy my place, or made the ſmalleſt effort to ſupplant me in it. We drank tea moſt ſociably, however; landed our Glenmoriſton friends, and tried to proceed homeward, but adverſe fate had determined we ſhould ſup there too, and ſo arreſted us with a dead calm four miles from home. Now midnight approached, and with it gloomy diſcontent and drowſy inſipidity. Our chief took a fit of the fidgets, and begun to cry Poh, Poh; his lady took a fit of yawning; his little grandſon took a fit of crying, which made his daughter take a fit of anger; the Doctor took a fit of ſnoring; even the good natured Admiral took a fit of fretting, becauſe the ſailors had taken a fit of drinking. All of a ſudden the Miſs C.'s took a fit of ſinging, to the great annoyance of the unharmonious groupe; when I went to the deck, fell into a fit of meditation, and began to ſay, "How ſweet the moonlight ſleeps upon this bank." Indeed nothing could be more inſpiring; now ſilvery calmneſs ſlumbered on the deep,

deep, the moonbeams quivered on the ſur-
face of the water, and ſhed a mild radiance
on the trees; the ſky was unclouded, and
the ſound of the diſtant waterfall alone
diſturbed the univerſal ſtillneſs. But the
general ill humour diſturbed my riſing rap-
ture, for it was now two o'clock, and no-
body cared for poetry or moonlight but
myſelf. Well, we ſaw the wind would not
riſe, and ſo we put out the boat, ſome
growling, others vapid, and the reſt half
aſleep. The gentlemen, however, rowed
us home, and left the galley to the drunken
ſailors. You may judge how gaily we ar-
rived.

I fancy Solomon had juſt returned from a
long party of pleaſure on the ſea of Tiberias,
where one of his Miſtreſſes had the hyſterics,
when he drew the penſive concluſion, that
"all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit."
Adieu!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Brooke, Printer,
Paternoster-row, London.